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ASPECTS OF THE SPIRITUAL

BY

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PREFACE

THE essays which follow cover a wide range of topics, but they all come, I think, easily under the title which I have given them. And for the reason that, in my view at least, whatever the theme you choose, if you pursue it far enough, it will lead you to the same end. It will disclose itself as an aspect of the spiritual.

We call ours an age of materialism. That need not greatly trouble us, for, if we examine the material of our materialism, we find it always a thin affair; with cracks and crevices in all directions, that offer views into another and a grander realm. And so, whether we discuss, as I have here endeavoured to do, such questions as the psychology of a crowd, or the intelligence of flowers, or sunshine, or religion's innermost gospels, we find that we are only opening different gates into the same field. That field is the spiritual.

In so far as the essays are theological they belong, it will be seen, to a progressive theology. The most

damnable, surely, of all heresies is that which shuts up Divine revelation to a distant past ; which excludes the present and the future from any share in it. I treat here the revelations of the past as true and as infinitely important ; as evidences of man's constant and intimate relation to a spiritual order. But always in the belief that this revelation is continuous, and that with the development of our higher faculties it will become ever clearer, ever more operative in human affairs. I write under the conception that all history, all science, all discovery, are parts of one and the same movement, a movement which is bringing into ever clearer light the fact that man is a spiritual being in a spiritual universe.

J. B.

London,
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I

LIFE'S HIGHER FORCES

LIFE remains the supreme enigma. The crown of being and its interpreter, it is itself ever uninterpreted. All we have and are—our activities and passivities, our sciences, arts, religions—come back to it, are expressions of it ; yet as to what itself is we remain in wondering ignorance. It is in our organs, yet we know not how. It has a thousand gradations, from lowest vegetable, or perhaps mineral, to highest spiritual, but we cannot say how they are related. Life apparently is not power. Its presence, as science shows, does not increase the amount of energy in the universe. But it is intimately allied to energy ; is seemingly a director and controller of energy. The guess of Sir Oliver Lodge seems, for the present, as near as any—that it is " something whose full significance lies in another scheme of things, but which touches and interacts with this material universe in a certain way, building its particles into notable configurations for a time—without confounding any physical laws—and then evaporating whence it came."

The researches of science in recent years have not diminished the mystery ; they have, in fact, added to it. Matter itself, on which life operates, is being revealed in bewilderingly new aspects. It is being

regarded as a transitory phase, assuming different forms and potencies in its passage from the ether in which it originates back to the ether again. Midway between the two we have electricity, which escapes the law of gravitation and is altogether a puzzling go-between. The atom—the foundation, the final substance, as was supposed, of all our solidities—is now seen as a sort of solar system, with electrons whirling at frightful speeds round a nucleus, as planets wheel round the sun. Matter, in short, is resolved into a mode of motion.

With these wonders in the material realm, we have not less baffling ones in the mental. Life seems here to be playing all manner of tricks with us. It gives us hints of the strangest powers, lodged in the oddest personalities. It gives us a Eusapia Palladino, an Italian peasant woman who can neither read nor write, but possessed of psychic forces which foremost scientists —a Crookes, a Lombroso, a Lodge, a Flammarion— recognise but can offer no account of. Under hypnotism we see body and mind in unheard of forms of interplay; exteriorisations of sensibility where a blow in the air several feet away is felt on the body; possessions, as it seems, by other personalities; telepathies where events miles away are photographed on the consciousness. The ego, like the atom, on closer inspection, shows as a world of unities within its own unit.

The thinker, in presence of these mysteries, is faced with the strangest questions. How far, he asks himself, are these powers prophetic? Are they the beginnings in the human organism of forces which

in their development will transform man, and raise him to new planes of perception and activity? Are laws yet to be discovered by observance of which these developments will make a cumulatively rapid progress, at a rate analogous to that of the sciences in our time?

These are in themselves sufficiently interesting speculations, and the attention of the world seems likely to be more and more drawn to them. And yet it is not of these things, it is not of occultism that we are thinking, when we speak here of "life's higher forces." One has, indeed, no right to speak of these abnormal energies as being "higher" in any moral or spiritual sense. At best they are neutrals; one may say, mercenary troops, as ready to fight for Ahriman as for Ormuzd; oftener apparently, in present conditions, on the devils' side than the angels'. There is nothing certain, assuredly nothing very elevating about them to report; whereas there is a line of forces where we can very clearly see the curve upwards, and where the rise prophesies everything that is good for our world. It is these we propose here to examine.

Taking man in his normal conditions, his history shows us three distinct levels of force, existing in him in different proportions, and in whose relative positions we see, in the course of the ages, a remarkable and steadily advancing change. At the beginning it is sheer muscularity, height and strength of limb, that fills the view. The man who can hit hardest, who towers Saul-like above his fellows, becomes leader. The chief is a man of his hands. Later we

find the brain getting new convolutions, its grey matter hiding fresh subtleties of power; and brain carries it over brawn. The inventor, the man who shows notions of strategy, who hits on a new weapon, is clever in combinations, diplomacies, comes to the front. His line of things is an endless one, and is exhibiting itself in fullest splendour to-day. But we are a long way here from the heights. Intellect may easily be a brutalism. It can stoop to the lowest ends. We see it busy creating trusts and rings, forging hideous murder-machines, exploiting for selfish interests the folly, the helplessness, of mankind.

It is not in these directions that we get our revelation of the human destiny. The animal, the intellectual, are here and to stay. They hold within them superb powers, capable of indefinite development. But they are subsidiary. They are tools, servants who look to a master. The hope of the world lies in another power, dimly discerned at present, evolving itself with infinite slowness, but which will, in the end, take full possession of the field, and bring all others into subjection. The world will eventually be ruled by its spiritual forces.

Man, working within the limits of space and time, is moved and inspired by what is beyond space and time. His greatest feature is his receptivity. He is a finite organ of infinite being. He is encompassed by an eternal life which is creating him as its embodiment here upon earth. And be it noted that all parts of him enter into the scheme. The animal, the intellectual, find here their meaning and importance. The spiritual works through the physical. The subtle

distillations of its life require always a visible apparatus. The mind of Christ, could it have been psychologically explored, would have been found connected with a fineness of nerve and cerebral structure exactly fitted for its working. Why the spiritual is at present so comparatively feeble as a factor in human affairs derives partly from the fact that the organism has not yet reached its ultimate strength. But the stream from the Beyond that is ever flowing through it is creating these organs, which are thus sure of their magnificent future.

The higher power that is thus coming to its own is more than a morality, though it includes all morality. It is, in the deepest sense, a religion ; a sense, that is, of derivation from an Unseen Holy, and of finding its happiness, its inspiration and its obligation in that. And this has been going into men through all the ages. India has felt it. Do we not see it in that first principle of the Vedanta philosophy, which enjoins that a man to be a teacher must subdue his passions, his selfish interests, his worldly ambitions ! The Greeks felt it, vaguely, yet with growing clearness. Its dawn shows itself assuredly in that speech of Demosthenes where he tells the Athenians, " It is not possible to found a lasting power on injustice, perjury and treachery. For as in structures of every kind the lower parts should have great stability, so the grounds and principles of great enterprises should be justice and truth."

But it is in Christianity that we see the greatest inflow of this spiritual power. The deepest word of Jesus, that which opens to us the vastest arc of His

mission, is that of the Fourth Gospel, "I am come that they might have life." It is wrong to express the Gospel in terms of dogma, of Church institutions. Its true expression is in terms of life. Its work has been, above all things else, a quickening to an extraordinary degree of the soul's higher capacities, and of the powers that flow out of them. It is in the history of the Gospel that we find what love is and can do. It is here, too, we see the energies that belong to sacrifice, to renunciation, to faith, to prayer. In the inner fellowships of the Christian community, amongst its trained souls, we get glimpses of what a union of the spiritual powers can effect.

Jesus, possessing these powers in unique fulness, was the prophet of them. He told people to believe in them. To most men of His time it was like telling them to fly. The higher forces as they unclose themselves require an enormous amount of faith, which, at first, is rarely forthcoming. Thirty years ago aviation was ridiculed; nobody then would have believed in the possibilities of radiant matter. It is harder still to the average man to believe in the sheer force of love, to trust himself to the practice of faith. Yet these are forces as real as gravitation; with laws of their own as constant, and as sure of their results. No brutalisms can resist love if only there is enough of it. It may be slain, only then to be mightier than ever. The discovery of it in our fellow is always to us a revelation of the God without us and within us. William Penn goes with it to the American Indians. While others are fighting for territory with sword and gun he takes with him justice and mercy, and finds

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the savage eager to meet him on that high plane. Like answered to like. There was divinity also in these untutored children of the wild, and it thrilled at once to this highest note.

It will be in the generation of these powers on the great scale that we shall witness the next stage in the human evolution. There will one day be enough of them to enable, nay, to compel, some foremost nation to proclaim its belief in trust rather than in distrust, in love of its neighbour rather than in suspicion and hatred of him. It will give up the race of armaments. It will cease to defile the seas with its hateful warships. And the response will be wonderful. That light-signal on the hill-top will be flashed back from a thousand summits. The new law will be acclaimed as final and universal. The nation that does this will, of course, take the risks of faith. But the higher force to which it commits itself will not fail. And were the bare possibility realised of its venture bringing it into collision with the lower forces, with the aggressive instincts of a less developed nation, what would this latter find to fight against? Could it bombard love? Could it bayonet brotherliness? And even going beyond that; if the faith-people suffered for a time the extremities of violence, could that experience be other than a Calvary out of which a world's redemption would flow? Could we pity the sufferers? Would not theirs be the greatest place in history? Would they not rejoice in their sufferings, knowing themselves as experimenters and conquerors in the noblest of all sciences, the science of highest life?

A study of this kind enables us to see with some

clearness what is the foremost and supreme business of the Churches. The religious communities of all names exist for the generating of life's higher powers. They are, or should be, articulated organs of reception and distribution ; an apparatus, one may say, for the wireless telegraphy of the upper airs, of the upper spheres. This is the meaning of a church's ministries, of its progress, of its disciplines. It is not truly a Church unless in its assemblies, great and small, there is an awed sense of spiritual contacts. "The Holy Ghost fell upon them." That was the secret of the primitive Church ; the secret of its power and spread. It is a secret the loss of which is the loss of all. The power here is not a sensuous excitement. It is a force of highest life, which expels our selfishness, and fills the place of it with love.

II

THE INNERMOST GOSPEL

The problem as to what constitutes the essential Gospel—what is the actual, central Christianity—is, not for the Churches only, but for the general mind, once more one of the leading questions. It has of late commanded the attention of foremost thinkers, and has produced some remarkable deliverances. Prominent amongst them are two works from opposing camps, by two of the ablest minds that are to-day occupied with theology. In his "What is Christianity?" Professor Harnack, writing from the standpoint of liberal Protestantism, gives us his answer. Christ's Gospel is a Gospel of the Divine Fatherhood. Jesus is the way to our highest knowledge of God. His mission was "to show us the Father." And He does this by a knowledge springing out of a unique intuition of, and spiritual union with, the Father, which make Him Son of Man and Son of God. He is the Guide, not the end. He carries us farther than Himself. He leads us to God.

The Abbé Loisy wrote *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*—the famous book which has led to his excommunication by the Pope—ostensibly as an answer to Harnack. He declares the Protestant professor's position to be contrary to the facts. An impartial criticism of the

historical records, he says, shows us that Christ's own view of His mission was in no sense exclusively or chiefly that of being a revealer of the Father. On the contrary, His governing idea was that of the Jewish Messiahship ; of being, as Messiah, the instrument of a universal restoration, by a world-end which was close at hand, which that generation would live to see. The expectation was falsified by events, but it was from that starting-point, according to Loisy, the Church grew. Its progress of belief, after Christ's death, was founded on faith more than on fact. It was a natural, nay, an inevitable, development of the religious mind of the time. With a skill and a dialectical subtlety which one cannot but admire, the French Abbé seeks to reconcile one after another of the successive phases of Catholic belief, as a development from the history which he has, with such ruthless criticism, previously dissected. The Catholic theology, he argues, is one thing, historical criticism another. The former is to be accepted as the legitimate outcome of faith, of the religious consciousness. But with all his skill he entirely fails to remove the predominant impression of his work ; that the faith here —if his analysis is correct—is faith in a mistake ; that the foundation of the Church was in illusion.

These expositions do not seem to have helped us very much in our search for the innermost Gospel. Two of the best-furnished intellects of Europe offer us their answers, and they are contradictory. The bewilderment of the seeker will hardly be diminished when he turns to other modern explanations—to that of Tolstoi, who finds the essence of Christianity in

Christ's moral teaching; or that of Schopenhauer, who, in his "World as Will and Idea," declares the essence of the Gospel to lie in its doctrines of renunciation, self-denial, complete chastity, "in a word, of the general mortification of the will"; "a doctrine of the deep guilt of the human race, and of the heart's thirst after redemption." Here are four accounts of the same thing. What is Christianity? It is highest Theism, says one; it is, or at least was, at the beginning, Jewish Messianism, says another; it is the true morality, urges a third; a fourth finds it asceticism, the mortification of the will.

In face of these divergences—and we have chosen here only the most prominent out of a multitude—some reflections arise. Are these accounts, any or all of them, true? Are they the whole truth? Are any of them contradictory of the other? Or is it not that their varying statements show as partial descriptions of a whole that is too vast for any one view? They are, it is to be seen, formulations, but is the thing they seek to express something that *can* be formulated? Or is it not that we are here in contact with a mystery of life in which a thousand acutest intellects may lose themselves without fathoming their theme?

It is safe to say that Christianity in its essence included all the forms we have mentioned, but that it transcended them all. One can hardly illustrate this better than by the example of the Jewish Messianism theory of Loisy, a theory that, as he puts it, amounts to a negation of Christ's higher claims. Loisy's faith is in spite of his historical criticism. But is that necessary? Properly considered, it will be found that

the history, instead of being in opposition to faith, is the granite support of it ; that the one is the legitimate offspring of the other. What did Christ's Jewish Messiahship amount to? Was it ever with Him anything other than the shell which held the treasure ? As a figure in history, born at a given age, and into a given nationality, He was bound, as a teacher, to meet the people on their level, to give His word in a form they could understand. The Messianic idea, the idea of a great Deliverer who should transform the world, possessed the Jewish nation at this time with almost a fury of enthusiasm. Jesus took this idea, but took it to transform it. From the brutal notions of military conquest with which His countrymen associated it, He lifted it to the heights of the spiritual. The temporal is at every point outshone by the eternal. The millennium was to come not by force of arms but by an inner revolution. The new Kingdom was to be one of spiritual states. "The Kingdom of God is within you." The Sermon on the Mount can by no miracle of exegesis be construed into the manifesto of a Jewish Messiah of the popular conception.

That the Jewish Messiah idea was a finite form for something infinitely higher is sufficiently shown by what happened afterwards. If we accept M. Loisy's theory, it is to the last degree singular that the first disciples of Jesus should have acted as they did. The Churches they formed were anything but merely Jewish Messianic societies. As they progress we see them hastening to shed their husk, and to exhibit their true meaning to the world. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace and

joy in the Holy Ghost." Here we have the rough rind on the ground, and the glorious flower in bloom, shedding its sweetness on the world. The gardener does not trouble about the shape and appearance of his orchid root. It is ugly enough. What it contains, what it will grow into, is what matters.

This connection of Jesus with the national Judaism is indeed, when we consider it, the best possible illustration of the Divine way of working in our world, of the way in which the Eternal manifests itself in time. Always, in this movement, we see a finite form carrying in it a something greater than itself. The body of Jesus—human, mortal like our own—is the tabernacle of a transcendent Spirit. And His teaching, clothed in the figures and language of a given age, has a kernel of meaning that belongs to all ages. The temporal, the material, has always its full rights, but the Eternal shines through it. He asserts Himself as the fulfilment of old-world Jewish prophecy, but the fulfilment is so entirely other, so entirely higher, than all Jew-dom expected ! And the Early Church interpreted Him truly when it found the Messiah-dom a passing form for that spiritual kingdom of inner righteousness and joy which it was to preach to every creature under heaven.

What happened to the finite form in which Christianity started should be, for all time, a lesson as to the place which form occupies in the spiritual movement. It will be the vastest advance in religious progress, the inauguration of a new era of peace and goodwill amongst hitherto warring disputants, when we have all clearly understood that theology is always

a form, at its best a finite, temporary, vanishing thing, never to be confounded with the actuality it stands to explain. This narrow Judaism, nursing all unknowing the mighty life it enclosed, shrinking itself into nothingness while this unknown, issuing from it, pursues its immeasurable career, is an image of all the systems that have followed it. They are at best skins and husks, vessels that carry the treasure, never to be mistaken for the treasure itself. How blessed had it been for some of us, from what despairs should we have been delivered, could we have understood this earlier! Theology, a hard and narrow theology, weighed so heavily on our young spirits! And all the time deep down in us we felt revolt. A voice there whispered that this hard, stony realm of definition and dogma was not our rest. Could someone have revealed to us, then, where the rest lay! Where we should find our innermost Gospel! Could someone have told us that religion was one thing and dogma another; that the one was so infinitely higher and diviner than this other which usurped its name! Amid all the achievements of our time, and they are wonderful, can anything be compared with this, that religious minds are at last finding their road, conquering their kingdom, breaking the bonds which held them, grasping the laws of that spiritual life which is their true liberty!

For we know something to-day about the innermost Gospel. We are beginning to understand why men have defined it so differently. We are no longer troubled by the differences, for we see the meaning of them. It is because they are dealing with life, the central mystery, that they wander so in their defini-

tions. For the Gospel was no more and no less than an inflow upon the human spirit of a new life. It was a new stage of inner vitality in the long move upward. It was an inrush of higher forces. It was an establishment by this means of a new kingdom, a kingdom of inward spiritual states. That essentially is the meaning to us of Christ. When, pushing our way through the long ages of Church history, we come right up to the start, we find there in Jesus—what ? A teaching, a healing, a religious activity ! Yes, truly ; but these are small parts of Him, streamlets from the fountain. The essential fact is that He is the centre and organ of a new life, inexplicable because it *is* life ; so much the more real that you are powerless to explain it. That is a way life has. The disciples feel this life, and they grope about for words to fit it. One says one thing, another another. And the ages through the people into whom the mystery has entered become vocal in their turn. We have explanations dogmatic, historic, critical, experimental. And they all belong to it, but we must keep them in their places. And the highest place for them is a humble one. When we can explain the life of a black-beetle we shall be more in a condition than we now are to compass life at its highest and divinest.

Because it is so infinite a thing we may express it in an infinitude of ways. But let us beware of limiting lines. That is where so many are going wrong to-day. We have " ethical movements " which propose to substitute a system of morals for our Gospel. Christianity is assuredly an ethical movement and Jesus was a teacher of morals. But to limit Him to this is

as if we should define motherhood as a philosophy of child-training. The child would thrive rarely on philosophy! To shut man up to this programme is to ignore and to starve the finest, the most august parts of his nature. What becomes under this *régime* of his awe, his reverence, his mysticism, his ecstasy of the higher feeling, his rapture of Divine union? The sense that these are the verities of our being is the deeper from the fact that we are unable to argue about them, to put them into syllogisms. The sense of them comes not from argument, but from experience. We know this innermost Gospel, this kingdom of the inner states, only when it has entered into us. We are sure of it in proportion as we progress in the development of it. We know faith by faith, prayer by praying, love by loving, inspiration by being inspired. The Gospel of Jesus satisfies us in proportion as we pass through its forms to its inwardness; in proportion as we know the mystery of its renunciations, the greatness of its Cross and passion, the depths of its love, its fellowship of the Divine, its taste of eternity.

III

THE SPIRITUAL INSTINCT

KANT'S greatest achievement as a philosopher, to our humble thinking, lay in his interpretation of the spiritual values and of the way we come by them. He employs, first of all, his pitiless logic in showing the limitations of logic. We do not touch God by reason. Our intelligence is a machine which, marvellous as are its powers, does not succeed in reaching the final reality. It cannot find for us the *Ding an sich*, the thing in itself. We get the spiritual values in another way. It is through the soul's necessities, by its unformulated instincts, we gain that certitude of God, of freedom and of immortality, which the unaided speculative intellect is powerless to attain.

This, we hold, is true psychology. It is the unformulated that is the biggest, the most influential thing in us. Our thought comes from something deeper than thought. Behind the suns in our firmament are the nebulæ that form the suns. As we examine the history of religions we become more and more conscious of something that is behind all their formulas, their doctrinal and ceremonial expression. It is that of a spiritual reality that is at once in man and beyond him, and that strives in these ways to possess and to form him. It is, we perceive, something far greater than religion itself, in the latter's historical forms. These have come out of it, but are

by no means the whole of it, nor its final utterance. In varying intensities, at different periods of history, it presses upon humanity, seeking admission, claiming acquaintance, and bringing new features into the life of the race.

It is in us to begin with, or there could never have been any response to the outside appeal. The religious leaders, in whom this reality works most powerfully, in offering its message to their fellows, are thereby asserting their belief in the essentially spiritual nature of man. Without that their Gospel would be an absurdity. It would be an orator exhorting a congregation of trees; a musician seeking fame from stocks and stones. The human power of response is the most religious fact in the world. And the genuine prophet feels sure of it, even in what seem the least likely quarters. Note in this connection the testimony of two modern historians on the Methodist revival. Says Lecky in his "History of England in the Eighteenth Century": "Methodism planted a fervid and enduring religious sentiment in the midst of the most brutal and neglected portions of the population." Justin McCarthy, in his "History of the Four Georges," speaking of Wesley and Whitefield, says: "They pressed through the dull, vulgar, contaminated hideousness of low and vicious life, and set streaming in upon it the light of a higher world and a brighter law." The two are worthy appreciations, yet with something left out. For, even in these degraded populations, had not the best part of the revival been *in* them, no Wesley or Whitefield could have kindled it. The light needed eyes; the divine music a nerve of hearing.

The Spiritual Instinct

In this Reality, to which the human instinct so faithfully responds, there are several things which need to be studied. We note first of all that in its advances to man it takes him where he is, and as he is. It never forces the pace, nor expects of him more than there is in him. And thus have we the spectacle, which has been so puzzling to many, of religions claiming to be divine, and yet clothed in language, wrapped up in ideas, which we have consciously outgrown. This, to-day, with myriads of earnest people, is the trouble with Christianity. They were brought up under a sense of its Divine claim ; they realise and bow before its overwhelming spiritual power. But try as they will, they cannot think themselves back into the mental conditions of the early believers. At a hundred points they are at variance. What distress it has occasioned many of us to give up some of the early Christian beliefs, beliefs which we had long regarded as the essence of the faith ! We know better now. We see more clearly the method of the spiritual life. The fresh instalments of eternity that break in on man from time to time, clothe themselves, we perceive, in the vestures of the age. The Divine element is there, sure enough. Ill will it be with us if we fail to discern it. But it will be a scarcely less serious blunder if we do not discern also the temporary elements under which it hides. The Christian teacher and the Christian hearer of to-day are under obligation to make this discrimination, to take out of the great revelation what is of the essence of the great Reality, and to leave what has to be left.

There are times when the spiritual instinct, and the

reality to which it corresponds, exhibit themselves, one may say, negatively ; that is, by the consciousness of an inner want, of a void that waits to be filled. Such a time is our own. Men having lost the peace which the life of the spirit brings are trying to fill themselves with substitutes. Civilisation is a scene of enormous activities at its circumference, with a desolating emptiness at its centre. Our science is bankrupt of spiritual satisfaction. Its only revelation is of its own powerlessness to help us. The foaming activities of society and fashion are emptier still. Bagehot, writing of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, describes this inner weariness. "Society is good," says the woman of fashion, "but I have seen society. What is the use of talking or of hearing *bon mots?* I have done both till I am tired of doing either. I have laughed till I have no wish to laugh again, and made others laugh till I have hated them for being such fools. As for instruction, I have seen the men of genius of my time, and they tell me nothing of what I want to know. They are choked with intellectual frivolities." A vivid picture this of a widespread experience. Humanity can never be satisfied by life on its outside edge. It is in itself too deep a thing for that. There are breadths of European society to-day, godless, aimless, sick at heart, which one might describe almost in the terms that Matthew Arnold uses of old Rome :—

> On that hard Pagan world disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell.

Against all this we have, in the circles where the emptiness is felt, strong reactions which take on various forms. One is in the return to mediævalism. It is felt that religion, if anything, contains the key to the human problem, and a longing eye is cast upon the period when faith was predominant and satisfied the soul. It is here that Rome and Ritualism make their appeal and win their successes. Why not, they say, breathe again the atmosphere of that ancient peace; the atmosphere in which saints grew; in which the glorious cathedrals, heaven inspiring, knit earth to the skies; in which men knew the visible as the shadow of the invisible, and man as the son of God?

And the appeal is a good one, as far as it goes. All the spiritual reality the mediæval faith held is as much for us as for any other age. But there is a difference between our acceptance and that of the earlier time. The Catholicism which satisfied the age of Bernard or of Francis cannot satisfy us, and for a good reason. It was one which, in its view of the universe, of history, of general world-knowledge, entirely met the intellectual requirements of the day. The house was big enough to hold its soul and body; to give it, indeed, ample and sumptuous lodging. It is so no longer. Humanity has grown until its head beats against the roof. At all hazards it must turn out; seek ampler quarters or choke. The best minds inside Rome to-day, as well as those outside, unite in this feeling. The system which filled the mediæval mind has had its day, and no Vatican authority and no yearning of earnest souls can fit it to the human growth. You cannot manufacture faith to order any

more than you can manufacture love. As Schopenhauer puts it: "*Der Glaube ist wie die Liebe; er lässt sich nicht erzwingen.*" "Faith is like love; it cannot be forced."

All this brings more and more clearly into view the supreme necessity of our age, and at the same time foreshadows a new coming of that Reality which is to meet it. What we are now waiting for is a spiritual revival, which in the largeness of its outlook will fit our mental size, while its deeper content fills the soul. The need, when it has reached a certain degree of intensity, will bring in the supply. The history of mankind, the *real history*, is full of this; it is the story of the recurrent entrance of the eternal into time. The Spiritual Reality waits its opportunity, and does not neglect it when it comes.

Christianity assuredly was one of these appearances. Who that reads the New Testament story can doubt the divinity that is in it? And the proof of that lies not in any doctrine or philosophy underlying it, but in the supreme energy of its appeal to the spiritual instinct; in the immense reinforcement it brought there. Man's soul can never be the same after that appearance.

And Christianity, as Vinet says, is capable of infinite revivals. We are awaiting such a revival now. We are not entirely in the dark, either, as to the form it will take. Says the Abbé Murri, the leader of the Italian Modernists: "We desire a Christianity more pure, more intense, more practical, more Christian, more conformed to its original, more conformed to the Gospel." The emptiness at the centre of modern

life will have to be refilled, as were the primitive believers, with the sense of that vast and glorious reality, the Kingdom of God within us. If the twentieth century is to have a history worthy of the name, it will be the history of the re-emergence of this eternal into our individual and our social life. But its form will not be the ancient form. There are no stale repetitions in the Divine process. It will clothe itself in the thoughts, in the cosmic ideas of the new mind. It will be the basis of a truer democracy. It is singular that Schleiermacher, with all his profound insight, should have made the mistake of addressing his appeal solely to the aristocrats of culture. It is a curious mistrust of the breadth of the spiritual instinct which permits him to say : " The pressure of material and unworthy tasks, under which millions of both sexes sigh, makes them incapable of the free glance by which the Reality can be found." History ought to have taught him that it is precisely amongst these burdened classes that the religious consciousness has again and again been found at its deepest.

We are sure of the revival because we are sure of the world-order and sure of God. And also because we are sure of man. He cannot deny himself. He cannot escape from his structure. He is a spiritual being in a spiritual universe. From without a Divine Reality presses upon him waiting to disclose itself. From within works perpetually an instinct of response. The two will build him into a greater than he knows.

IV

JESUS AND CRITICISM

It is evident that the whole question of the personality of Jesus is up for reconsideration. What history, studied in the modern method, has to say of Him; what the Church has had to say; how these two accounts are related; and what the differences between them mean for our present faith and for the future of Christianity—these are the topics which, whether we like it or not, are being afresh forced upon us. It would seem as though the world-old battle is to be re-fought; as though every stage of it were to be gone through again; as though the entire process by which the Church won its belief is to be re-thought and re-lived.

To-day the most conspicuous of these processes is that of criticism, largely of hostile criticism. Everything that can be adduced in disparagement of Christ's claims is being hunted up with tireless assiduity. The Gospels are being searched for evidence of His defects and limitations. And the conclusion is announced as inevitable that His personality and position have been enormously overrated, and that His value as a spiritual asset in the world-scheme must be largely written down.

As we read it all we are reminded of a remark

of Dr. Johnson to Boswell: "Everything which Hume has advanced against Christianity had passed through my mind long before he wrote." In like manner, everything that is being written to-day in destructive criticism had passed long before through the minds of most competent students. They have allowed for it. They have assigned its place in the formation of their convictions. And, what is much more to the point, all this in one form or another had passed through the mind of the Church, through its collective intelligence. And it is a sufficiently significant fact to begin with that the total result has been the Church's faith, as we have it to-day. Christianity has thriven upon hostile criticism.

Let us see now what the latest critics of the personality of Jesus have to say. A writer in a recent number of *The Hibbert Journal* has summed up, with great apparent zest, their case against Him. The orthodox claim, he says, is not borne out by such history of Him as we possess. That history is itself extremely fragmentary and unsatisfactory; but taking it as it stands, it exhibits a person naïvely human rather than Divine. He knows nothing of Greek thought, nothing of political economy. He cannot be imagined as understanding the conceptions of Newton and Copernicus. He was steeped in the Eastern and Jewish ideas of the time. He believed in and taught an approaching world-catastrophe which did not take place. In His teaching about divorce He accepted the Oriental degradation of women. In these and other instances He exhibits to us the close limitation of His thought. And, finally, we are assured that

the way out of these difficulties by the doctrine of the Kenosis, or Divine self-emptying, is no way at all. The concept itself is absurd and impossible.

There are statements here which are entirely disputable, but we will not, at the moment, stay to consider them. Let us admit at the beginning that in the historic Jesus, as presented in the Gospels, there are limitations, indications of an entirely human immersement in the spirit and ideas of His time. Let us suppose, also, that here and there legends have crept into the story ; that we may have to make a rebate on miracles and wonders, as owing themselves partly to imagination and partly to mistaken interpretations of natural events. Let us, in short, in dealing with these narratives, give fullest play to our destructive energies. But when we have pushed our levelling to its farthest limits, what happens ? We discover to our surprise that we are not at the end, but at the beginning of our problem. We are faced now with some constructive work. We have, in our turn, to account for Christianity. When the dust of destruction has rolled away some positive facts loom out with embarrassing distinctness and demand to be explained.

Before noticing them, however, a preliminary question has to be settled. The Christian faith looks to Jesus as a revelation of God. Criticism reduces Him to the dimensions of a man. The question is whether anything new has been said here ; whether these two positions are really opposed ? How, we ask, is God to reveal Himself in humanity ? Well, how does He reveal Himself anywhere ? We believe that He is in His universe, but the astronomer does not find Him in full de-

monstration at the end of his telescope, nor the chemist as assuming some positive shape at the bottom of his crucible. We say there is revelation here, but it is a veiled one. The veiling is not less remarkable than the revealing. Chemistry does not show more of Him than there is in chemistry ; the revelation will be all shut up within its laws and limitations. May we not expect that in history, on the plane of human affairs, the same law will obtain ? If God does not put more of Himself into chemistry than chemistry will hold, we may expect that He will not put more into humanity than humanity will hold. And thus the self-limitation, the self-emptying of Deity which we are told is " an impossible conception," becomes the first condition of any revelation at all.

Let us, then, begin with Jesus as historically human. In doing so we shall begin where the New Testament begins. In the reported sermon of Peter in Acts ii., which gives us an invaluable insight into the primitive conceptions of the Jerusalem Church, the apostle speaks of Him as " Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you." Here is the full human. But at the same time we find it is a *new* human. We come here to the question on which the entire controversy hangs. We have been talking hitherto of Jesus's limitations, of what as a personage in history He did not know and did not do. But negatives are nothing as against positives, and we now reach a mighty cluster of positives. Christ's position to-day with us lies not in what He was not and did not, but in what He was and did. Here the questions crowd in. How do we account for the impression which Jesus

made on His disciples? How came they to speak of Him as they did; to exhaust their vocabulary in expressing their devotion and love and worship? How came Paul by his impressions of Jesus? How came he to rejoice in being the slave (*doulos*) of the Master, to spend all his life in preaching Him? How did the Church arise—a community of all nationalities drawn together by this one attraction, held together through the centuries in the love and worship of this name? We are continually told to-day that the Gospels are exaggerations of the historic fact; that they are products rather of faith than of exact research. Yes, but how did this faith arise in the first instance?

Given effects must have adequate causes. When we hear an echo we know that its volume and resonance are in exact proportion to the producing sound and the receiving surface. We have in the history of the Church the echo of the original voice. That echo is the most astonishing thing the world has known. We get it first in the apostolic life and literature. Who will assert that we have not here a new Divine note; a new and higher form of inward experience? We are now told that the apostolic letters contain little or no reference to the historic Jesus. But would one of them have been produced without Him? They are part of the echo. Then we note the outpouring of a fresh moral and spiritual life upon the world. A new type of character rises in society, a new feeling throbs in human breasts, a new watchword gains currency. It is the watchword of love. Out of the scum of the populace a fellowship grows, of which an early testimony gives this picture: "They do not

rehearse speeches, but exhibit good works; when struck they do not strike again; when robbed they do not go to law; they give to those that ask of them, and love their neighbours as themselves." The saint, a character containing hitherto unheard-of riches of personality, becomes a feature of society. Generation after generation we have lives that breathe an unparalleled sweetness and spiritual power upon their contemporaries. Francis of Assisi lights up the thirteenth century with the beauty of his holiness. Catherine of Genoa in the fifteenth leaves her palace to live in a hospital, ministering there as an angel of mercy; when the plague devastates the city and all the wealthy flee, she remains heroically, amid all risks, as helper and comforter. And the Christian story is full of such. These, also, are parts of the echo.

And the echo is always an echo of Jesus. His is the creative force that builds the community; His the love that fills their lives with love. How, we ask again, did all this come about? Trace the thing from the beginning. First of all the disciples, His contemporaries, find something unique in Jesus, and their language about Him is their endeavour to put this uniqueness into words. Then comes a second stage of heightened thought and expression. The New Testament, as we now read it, gives us the clearest evidence of this second stage. In it we see the first tradition continually overlaid by a later one. The fourth Gospel, the later epistles, certain passages in the Synoptics, are all evidences of this. In accounting for that heightened feeling, it is impossible for us to overlook the fact that it was connected with the im-

passioned belief of the community that the historic Jesus, having passed through death, was now acting on the Church from the Invisible. The power behind them was His power. Jesus had become the Christ. Was there any departure from credibility or from reality in that belief? It would take a far greater knowledge of the universe than any mortal of us possesses to prove it!

We can come back now on one or two points raised earlier in this discussion. We are told that the historic Jesus was comparatively ignorant. He knew nothing of the modern sciences; of the concepts of a Copernicus, of a Newton. Suppose it were so, that would mean, what we already know, that the Divine process is economical of its forces. Jesus was not here to teach the world what it could learn elsewhere. The world has learned its mathematics, its political economy, by other means to which it had access. Jesus had other work on hand. His silence on this side in no degree affects His authority in the region where His mission lay. It is singular to remember in this connection that Copernicus and Newton in no degree recognised the difficulty which is here raised. They found their need of Christ not as a mathematician, but as a spiritual help, as a Saviour. Copernicus spends his life as a minister of His Church, and in dying makes his last words expressions of passionate devotion and trust.

It is, indeed, only as we understand this method of the Divine process, with its close economy of power, that we shall obtain any satisfying conception of the mission and place of Jesus. As an historic per-

sonality He must conform to historic conditions. He could not act outside them. As a teacher He was bound to use the conceptions and the language of His contemporaries. Otherwise, how could He be understood? In His moral teaching He had to begin with them where they were and as they were. His work here was to set going an evolution; not, by an impossible *tour de force,* to bring in that evolution's latest term.

To say that the Jesus of the Gospels is either to be accepted as finality in teaching and all else, or to be deposed and rejected, is to have the strangest misconception of the world's spiritual process. Why, indeed, should we allow any talk of finality to interrupt our Christian faith and joy? That faith and joy are a matter not of what we do not, but of what we *do* find in Jesus. And that is a glorious and satisfying possession.

V

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

To speak of Nietzsche's theory of life as " the new philosophy " is, we are aware, not technically accurate. It has been before the world for some time and there are already newer ones. But we use the term because it is largely new to Englishmen. As a people we are somewhat of laggards in thinking. We have done something, it must be confessed, to merit that cruel German saying : " The English are the politest of nations ; they never take up a system till everybody else has done with it." The Continent, it is true, has not by any means done with Nietzsche, but we are amongst the last to pay him attention. There are signs, however, that he is now to have a vogue amongst us. Vigorous efforts are being made to boom him. Cheap translations are being published of his principal works ; and he is the subject of plentiful essays, lectures and other advertisements.

His disciples are exceedingly ardent. Their prophet has said the last word. His negation of God, his repudiation of Christianity, and his new programme of morals are put before us as the final wisdom. Here at last is the teaching which is to liberate us from the old superstitions, the old bondages, and to put man-

kind, after its long wanderings, on the right track at last.

What, then, in sum, is it that Nietzsche has to say? His starting point is that we are in a Godless world, and are to make what we can of that. He takes the evolution of modern thought through Hume, Kant, Darwin and Spencer as leading inevitably to that conclusion. We have to deal not with God, but with man, and most of all with Superman. "Dead are all Gods; now we will that Superman live." "Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, so that this kind of blasphemy died also. Now the most terrible of things is to blaspheme the earth and to rate the importance of the unknowable higher than the significance of the earth." We are to rid ourselves of the supernatural, of revelations, actings upon us of external powers. Humanity has and is itself. It knows nobody else. It has to make the best of itself; the question is how?

It is at this point that our prophet comes into contact with Christianity. It is singular to note the venom with which this son of the manse, this descendant of a long line of Protestant clergymen, attacks the faith of his fathers. His animosity reminds one of Diderot. Says he, in the "Will to Power," "I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity. . . . I call it the one immortal shame and blemish upon the human race." And his animosity is directed not so much against it as a theology but as a morality. The ethical system we have derived from the Gospel is all wrong, is leading to the impoverishment and decay of the race. His

great work, he conceives, is to set us right here by a transformation of ethical values. So much of what, under Biblical influence, we have regarded as good is bad, and of what we have thought bad is good. We come here upon his great classification. There are, he says, two moralities in the world, the product of the two great sections into which humanity is divided. They are the moralities respectively of the weak and of the strong, of the slave and of his subjugator. Good and evil have meant what suited these two classes; and the good of the one was the evil of the other.

The strong, the subjugators, the nobles, the *Aristoi*, have their own table of virtues; they believe in courage, sagacity, firmness, hardihood, the qualities of the warrior and the ruler, the qualities, in short, that lead to power, and keep men there. To this class Nietzsche says: "A new table of the law, O my brethren, I put over you. Become hard. Away with popular sympathies. Use your power; take what there is." It is throughout a gospel of fighting. "War and courage have done more great things than the love of one's neighbour." The proper place for the weak man is the wall. "The weak and defective must go to the wall . . . and we must help them to go." Here Nietzsche makes use of Darwin, though he pushes his thesis far beyond what Darwin ever suggested. We are to crush out the weak in the interests of the strong. This is the human way upward. It is thus that out of man will come the Superman; that higher race for which we are the bridge, the preparation.

The morality of Christianity, he contends, is, on

the contrary, that of the inferior, subjugated, slave class. The Sermon on the Mount, with its "blessed are the meek, the poor, the persecuted"; the statements of St. Paul that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called," that the foolish things of the world are chosen to confound the wise, are the ethics of the defeated. The type they seek to create is that of "the domestic animal, the herding animal, the sickly animal man, the Christian." It has been the characteristic of this type that it has turned the great fighting instincts of the superior races *inwards;* by a miserable involution its native ferocity is turned in on itself, immolates itself, makes itself suffer, and thus creates the Christian characteristic of "a bad conscience." All this, then, is to be repudiated and destroyed. We are instead to take the line which the "will to power" dictates. The strength of the strong is to be fearlessly and pitilessly exercised. The higher-man is to climb ever higher, on the shoulders of the lower.

We need not go further into the details of this singular programme. It is time to examine its main propositions. Have we here any improvement on what we already possessed; any addition to our spiritual treasure or working morality; anything new that is also true? Even to this last query we cannot say "yes." We have heard it all before in other forms and other connections. We may say, indeed, with Fouillée: "Mix the Greek sophism and scepticism with the naturalism of Hobbes and with the monism of Schopenhauer, corrected by Darwin, seasoned with some paradoxes of Rousseau and Diderot, and you

will have the philosophy of Zarathustra, the modern Machiavelli." The good in him, we say, is not new. His doctrine of the value of suffering, which he urges in opposition to Schopenhauer, has been in the world since Christ died on the cross. His idea of the Superman has for centuries been part of the furniture of the Christian mind. 'Mid all the confusion of views on the Person of Christ there has never been absent from Christian philosophy the idea of a loftier, diviner type of humanity, with the Superman of Galilee at its head. And the new element which evolution has introduced into the doctrine was not Nietzsche's. It arose nearer home.

And his newness, we say, is not trueness. When he dismisses with such confidence the idea of a Divine Personality as related to our universe and to ourselves, he ceases indeed to be new. We feel him to be belated and outgrown. The idea is a relic of that mid-Victorian materialism which is repudiated by the best thought of to-day. It is felt to be an absurd cosmic provincialism which shuts up thought, intelligence—personality, in short—to our corner of the universe. The whole tendency of the latest thinking is coming back on personality as the one reality we know and are surest of. And we refuse the dictum which bars us from expanding it to infinity. As Professor Shaler says : " All that we divine of the unseen leaves us to conceive that it is a realm of unending and infinitely varied originations. Into the equation is continually going the influential qualities of newly-formed individualities." To secure these—to express herself in persons—is what Nature continually labours

after, and it is an instinct of the soul which looks to an eternal personality as their originator. And here, speaking of instincts, let us say that it is a gross misrepresentation of Kant to speak of him as in any way a preparation for Nietzsche. His doctrine of the Practical Reason is, on the contrary, the affirmation of God, based on the surest of all foundations—that of these spiritual instincts. More trustworthy than our logic machine is the soul's cry, the appeal of its necessity. It was this which Kant felt and affirmed. The religious feeling is as sure an indication of an answering Reality as the eye is an argument for light or the ear for sound. When we talk of the mental furniture of the higher man, are we to leave out his capacity for veneration, for devotion, for that faith which, forcing its way through the narrow boundaries of the visible, fixes itself on an invisible and eternal? That the Nietzschean Superman would in this department have nothing to feed his soul upon but a mechanical universe, and his brother scramblers on this planet, is, with some of us at least, enough and more than enough. That is not the kind of upper-man we are waiting for. We are in search of one so much less pitiable.

Thus much for theology. Let us turn now to morality. The Christian morality, we are told, is a slave morality, the morality of the weak as against that of the strong. One might ask here whether the Founder of it, whether Jesus, is to be considered a weakling. Napoleon did not think so, and he had some means of judging. We may ask, also, whether the natural instincts of the oppressed and downtrodden are in the direction of a

weak humility, of loving-kindness and forbearance? Let the history of the French Revolution, to take one instance, be an answer. The morality of the under-man does not exhibit itself here as developing in the line of excessive meekness! Moreover, when we are talking of the morality of the weak it is worth while asking, Who are the weak? Have we a proper division here; or is it not that Nature, careful of the unity of the race, has so cunningly mixed matters that no classification is possible? The wealthy man may be a perpetual invalid; the giant in bodily strength may be intellectually an imbecile; the head of an Aristotle or a Newton may be on puniest shoulders. Who are the strong and who the weak in these cases? The strength and the weakness are, in the world-scheme, not placed in absoluteness, in independence, over against each other, but run like a thread throughout the whole warp and woof of humanity.

It is here that Christianity, in its morality of love, of sympathy for the lowly, of universal burden-bearing, proclaims itself on Nature's side; proclaims that humanity is not, as our philosopher would have it, a hideous separation in which two opposing elements war against each other, but a unity which seeks evermore to manifest itself. It seeks the perfection not of a class, an interest, but of the race. Its cry is:

> Make no more giants, God,
> But elevate the race at once.

Which is the nobler, the saner conception—this which contemplates humanity as a whole, a family, where if one member suffer all suffer with it, which uses its

strength for the help of the weak, which hunts up its stragglers and will have none left behind in the march ; or the Nietzschean savagery which beats down the helpless in the struggle to the front, which makes man the enemy of his fellow, which creates a world in which myriads of slaves carry their tyrant masters on their shoulders ?

It remains to be said here that the notion, on which the attack is largely founded, that the Christian morality, in its care for the needy and the disabled, tends to perpetuate and propagate weakness, is as unfounded as the rest of the system. The Christian temper of to-day, so far from propping the human disabilities, is bent, with all its energy, upon their extirpation. It is showing the recoverability of man from his worst sicknesses. It believes in the health possibilities of the race, and is seeking to secure the conditions of it. It is reaching confidently for its manhood and its supermanhood, knowing that it has the clues in its hands.

VI

IMPERFECT RELATIONSHIPS

How far do you understand your dog? What is more, how far does your dog understand you? There are intensest intimacies between you. He knows your hours, your uprising and your downsitting. His joyous bark as you go out together has such volumes of meaning. Here is worship! If anything could make us ashamed of our faults it should be the unmeasured trust of this faithful follower. Scott thought the misery of having dogs was that they die so soon. How can we part with one who believes in us so thoroughly? The Indian expects indeed to renew the fellowship in the next world.

> He thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
> His faithful dog will bear him company.

All this intimacy, and then comes the barrier. When all is said, what is his world as compared with yours? What a pathos in that upward look of his, his effort to comprehend, to rise to your level; his unspoken regret that he cannot put more understanding into his love! How strange that he should know you so well and yet so ill!

We instance him as an example of the whole situation

as between ourselves and our world. It is one of our imperfect relationships. With the million things and persons around us, we are on the oddest terms. We know and we do not know. There is acquaintance, intimacy; always enough to be going on with. But at best it is only the veriest fragment of reality. As to ourselves, John Morley says with entire truth, "Whether we are good or bad, it is only a broken and incoherent fragment of our whole personality that even those who are intimate with us, much less the common world, can ever come into contact with." We can imagine a world where everybody knew everything, where we fitted with perfect accuracy into the entirety of our surroundings. But that is not our world. It is, when we think of it, the strangest of situations—this of finding ourselves embarked on a universe with which we are only now beginning to be on speaking terms. Our forefathers were even worse off. What notions they had of the cosmos they lived in! Nature was kind to them; fed them, housed them, gave them their loves and their laughter, but disclosed to them so little of her secret! And, indeed, with all our new science, are we really much farther on than they? We are busy with phenomena, with appearances, but what of the "thing in itself"? How much is this outside view of ours really worth? What answer is there to that disquieting hint of Hegel: "The form in which you find Nature arises only in and through the finite mind." Could we measure the distance between the view of things of this finite mind of ours, and the view of them by the infinite mind, what

a new and quite different essay should we be able to write on " imperfect relationships " !

At present we know Nature only in one set of her meanings ; in her aspect to our five senses. But she may have a million other meanings, to be discerned by other senses, other powers of perception. Our contact with reality is, we see, through the most limited of apertures. The world serves our turn ; we forget it may be serving the turn of myriads of other beings in a quite different way. Bradley, in his " Appearance and Reality," acutely observes that " every fragment of visible nature might, so far as is known, serve as part in some organism not like our bodies. That which we see may be confined in an organic unity with the invisible ; and again, one and the same element might have a position and function in any number of organisms." The feeling comes over us at times with an overpowering intensity that we are outsiders to Nature ; that to name things is not to know them ; the feeling that we are knocking at a closed door, wondering whether there will ever be admittance to the inner chamber, to an auguster intercourse.

This sense of an imperfect fellowship which comes on us so vividly in our outside hours, follows us when we turn indoors. We have spoken of dogs, but what of humans ? There are half a dozen in family, bearing the same name, deriving from the same blood, sharing the same fortunes, eating, drinking, sleeping under the same roof ; who know each other's features, doings, sayings, by heart ; who have reached the *ne plus ultra* of familiarity. But they are all

living in different worlds. Your idealist grows up amongst brothers and sisters to whom his soul feels no central kinship. The nearest kin he can discover is, perhaps, a thinker who died a thousand years ago. Flesh and blood, we find, are sometimes among the thinnest of the ties that bind us together. What tragedies there are of children that bear no spiritual resemblance to their parents! Some of the wildest excesses of the Restoration were by the children of the Puritans. Milton's daughters hated his work, and wished him dead! And even where the intercourse is closest, with what immense reserves do we carry it on! We are in this like the earth we tread on; with our marts of commerce, our ports of entry, our open roads where travellers pass to and fro; but also with our desert areas, our mountain solitudes, our arctic and antarctic poles, realms silent and remote, where no man comes.

But this imperfection of relationship goes beyond family life. It extends to our spiritual fellowships. It is one of the most conspicuous features of the church life of to-day. We have the singular and portentous spectacle of men being inside the Church with their hearts, and outside it with their heads. How many are in Lessing's case, who found his intellect in perpetual revolt against the theologians, but who, when Christianity was attacked and trampled on, felt all his heart on its side! In these times cultivated men worship often enough with half their nature. It is the same all over the ecclesiastical area. At the High Church ceremonial and in the Nonconformist meeting house, there are the same divided minds;

acceptance and rejection going on simultaneously, and in the one breast. Strange and unnatural warfare ; a Church appealing at once to the highest instincts, and yet shocking so often something else there that is also of the highest ! What was once said of the Church in France, that " Frenchmen could neither live with it nor without it," is true over a wider area. In England to-day our cultivated young men in multitudes find themselves in the astonishing position of facing a theology which they do not believe, allied with a religion which they cannot do without. It is time that state of affairs came to an end. The demand of to-day is for a Church high enough and broad enough for a man's whole manhood to stand up and stretch itself in ; when the religious essence in which all agree shall be put into forms in which all can unite :

> When mind and soul according well,
> Shall make one music as before,
> But vaster.

In whatever direction we turn we meet this same spectacle of an imperfect relation, often so direfully imperfect. Take that, for instance, between man and woman. These two halves of humanity are long in finding their true union. The East has enslaved woman : the Church has treated her with suspicion, often with contempt. In modern life Nietzsche proposed again the old bondage. To multitudes the prevailing tie is of the lowest passions. Amongst classes deemed entirely respectable, where the sexual relation is consecrated by religion and marriage, what an amazing

ignorance of, if not contempt for, the higher laws connected with parenthood! The Church here has surely neglected one of its plainest duties in the omission of firm, clear utterance concerning the moralities of fatherhood and motherhood. How many of us as yet accept that significant word which Maeterlinck drops? "We find as man grows more civilised the act of possession assumes ever less value in his eyes, if there go not with it, if there do not precede, accompany, and follow it, the emotion built up of our thoughts and feelings, of our sweetest and tenderest hours and years." Humanity will take its greatest leap forward when the ethics of the sexual relation, all the physical, moral, and spiritual laws of it, are fully understood and faithfully observed.

There is, however, another aspect of our theme which remains to be considered. Thus far we have been dealing with it on what may be called its under side. Its suggestions have been of our weakness, of our limitations. It will not do to stop there. That we came into the world with things as they are is to be taken by us as evidence that this is the road along which we were meant to travel. The goal is undoubtedly that of a more perfect relationship all round. But we could not do without the journey to it, and the things to be encountered there. Consider, for instance, the way in which these mutual imperfections help towards the human solidarity. That we are not whole in ourselves is one of the indispensable factors towards the wholeness of humanity. It is well that we cannot stand alone; that we have to borrow so much of our complete self from our neighbour.

When the prophet girds at the feeble response which his idealisms meet with at the hands of his practical, humdrum neighbour, let him remember how badly he himself would get on without the practicalities, the worldly sagacities of that neighbour. Without him, he would probably have had to go without meat and drink ; without board and lodging. Civilisation needs the prophet, but it needs all these others. Let him preach his gospel, his philosophy ; but not forgetting that without this non-idealist, who fails so miserably to understand him, his book had not been printed, his tabernacle had not been built.

Another point is that our relationships are continually being improved. And, in the present constitution of our nature, that tells more for our happiness probably than if we were born with them in a perfected state. Had we been planted at the top of the hill, where had been the joy of climbing ? Nature's game with us of hide-and-seek is really one of the chief joys of existence. She gives us each day the delight of a new surprise. It is a glorious prospect this she opens of an endlessly widening knowledge ; still more when we consider that each new fact we wring from her is a permanent addition to the wealth of life. Could there be a more ideal condition than this of being placed in front of endless secrets, the unravelling of which stimulates our intellect to its highest endeavour ; and where each problem solved means the heightening and further enrichment of our being !

In our human relations also, what an asset is this opening for endless improvement ! The family circle is

rarely quite ideal, but each one of us has it in his power to help the ideal forward, and that to an immeasurable extent. In all the social unions of which we form a part, there is no one member unresponsive to the advances of our better self. The disagreement, the averted face, the chill at the heart in your friend, all these are ultimately *your* affair ; they can be swept away by your volition. There is no higher power than this, no more exquisite joy in the exercise of it, than the will to win our friend, yea and our enemy ; the will that our sunshine shall disperse his clouds ; that the exercise of our best shall bring his best also into effective play. And this power is in us all.

" In us all," but with a reservation. We are here brought sharply up to the final and determining point. For this power, when we seek it, we discover to be in ourselves, and yet not in ourselves. Here find we the mystery, the august secret of our being, the fact of our doubleness, the fact that—as with the moon yonder—one face of us is turned towards the earth, and the other to the invisible. Our power is in our relation to that Invisible. We are equal to life's endless variety, to its ceaseless vicissitudes by our firm anchorage in the ineffable Unity. It is when we know the One that we can face the all. To get in that quarter the true relation is the chief problem of living. To improve it daily, to know more and more of God ; to find in us an ever richer inflow of His grace and love and power—there is the way of victory, the clue to all perfectness.

VII

OPEN-AIR RELIGION

When spring merges into summer ; when we have one of those vernal seasons of which Milton speaks when he invites us to "go out and see her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth," we transfer our lives as much as possible to the open air. Interiors are at a discount. No upholsteries, no richness of carving and gilding could vie with these prodigal beauties of flower and leaf, of hedgerow and woodland. It is a time to proclaim a religion of the open air. Keats, in one of the loveliest poems in the language, gives us an early world picture in that kind which almost sets us longing. Its paganism does not seem to make it less fascinating :

> Glory and loveliness have passed away,
> For if we wander out in early morn,
> No wreathed incense do we see upborne
> Into the east to meet the smiling day :
> No crowd of nymphs soft-voiced and young and gay
> In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,
> Roses and pinks and violets to adorn
> The shrine of Flora in her early May.

As the poet here makes his vision rise before us, we feel that he is touching a lack somewhere in our own civilisation and our own religion. Why should they

both be dissociated from loveliness ? Why so artificial, so divorced from Nature, so remote from the primitive conditions ?

All the early religions were of the open air. The immemorial East has done its worship mainly out of doors. The Vedic hymns of three thousand years ago were called forth by the wonder of sun and moon, the breath of the early morning, the terrors and splendours of the world. The exquisite scenes of Genesis show us the patriarchs in their journeyings, here building an altar, there sleeping on the ground and dreaming of the celestial ladder, or receiving angels' visits under the oaks of Mamre. It is all religion and a religion of the open air.

It is here, indeed, in the wide open spaces, the solemn silences, that religion was born. Lonely shepherds on the Babylonian plains looked up on the starry hosts above, " that great and awful city of God," and felt devotion's inmost thrill. The Elijahs, the John Baptists were men of the desert. It takes your smart man of town to pose as cynic and sceptic. His pertness may be suitable to Bond Street. It is out of place among the everlasting hills.

Christianity was born in the open. It is a part of its charm that its setting is beautiful Galilee. Jesus was a Nature-man. His words, so immeasurably rich in themselves, break upon us with a reminiscence of mountain and lake, of the fisher's boat, of the flowers of the field. The soft winds blow over us as we read. We are in the freshness of a spring morning. Nowhere else have the soul and Nature come into such deep communion.

And the great religious movements that have had this for starting-point have been largely open-air movements. The hermits and cenobites of the early centuries were people who had forsaken town for country. The crusades were preached under the sky. The revivals of successive ages have been, in more senses than one, breaks into the open. Eighteenth-century Methodism was largely an affair of the hill-side. Its gospel was one of free grace and fresh air. Wesley's Journal is full of the open country. The crowds, from Cornwall to Northumberland, are here in a churchyard, there at the cross-roads, yonder on the moorside. Primitive Methodism had Mow Cop for its centre. In the American West, religion established itself by an open-air ministry. There are few more inspiring chronicles than the records of those early evangelistic wanderings, where devoted men, their saddle-bags stuffed with Testaments and hymn-books, camping out in the forests, swimming bridgeless rivers, winning their meat with the rifle, visited the lonely homesteads, baptizing the children, exhorting the parents, gathering settlers together for prayer and preaching, traversing the illimitable wastes with the dauntless courage born of faith and love.

But all this is history. What has it to do with ourselves and the modern situation? That is what we are coming to. We want some new thinking and some new departures in this matter of open-air religion. There are considerations belonging to it which probably did not enter the minds of Wesley or the promoters of camp-meetings, which the Vedic hymnists and the builders of Stonehenge never dreamed of,

but which to-day we are bound to study. The matter goes a great deal deeper than some of us appear to imagine. Properly understood, it will be seen to govern the entire religious situation. Let us take things in order. The supreme business of religion—to begin at the beginning—is the development of life, of the highest life. "I am come," said Jesus, "that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." But this high spiritual has to begin lower down. It was not for nothing that the early languages made life and the soul the same thing as the breath. *Anima, pneuma, ruach*—in Latin, Greek and Hebrew there is the one idea. There is no soul or spirit in you, thought the ancients, without the air, the breath. And they were right.

They went here not so much upon metaphysics as on the crude fact, which is there still for us to verify. Gather a meeting of eminent saints, of orthodox theologians; pump out from the place of assembly the oxygen it contains, and there will be no orthodoxy or saintship left—none, at least, that is of any service to us. We do not make experiments exactly of that kind. Yet our modern civilisation is offering results which, while not so startling as this, are not dissimilar—more fatal in a way, because spread over so vastly wider an area. These results are giving us in a mitigated form the outcome of our suggested vacuum. Why is it that we do not produce saints in a London slum; in homes of one room? That is the question Nature is asking us; which she is pressing upon us in her own bluff, uncompromising way. It is at our peril we neglect to take up her inquiry.

But are we really paying it any proper attention? We are discussing with great seriousness the decline in church attendance. We are attributing it to all sorts of reasons—to materialism, the higher criticism, the want of faith, the decay of dogma. Has it occurred to us to consider this other reason—the want of air? Have we asked ourselves how far the week-end excursion, which so often now takes the place of public worship, is the people's rush out of the lethal chamber, the poisoned room, into which civilisation has thrust them? We have crammed our populace into stuffy cities; immured them in close factories for their daily work, in closer living-rooms for their nightly rest. It is a *régime* under which their frames dwindle, their lungs gasp, their blood deteriorates, their brains weaken, their enthusiasms die. Has the Church, to cure all this, nothing more to offer than her stuffy buildings, her gatherings in an unventilated air?

If we can do no better than this, Nature, who has her own religious methods, will, sooner or later, make an end of the Churches. If they have forgotten that religion is for the promotion of the highest life, she has not. What object-lessons in this matter she is setting before us! On one side she produces a Western cowboy, rough, Sabbath-breaking, blasphemous, perhaps, but standing six feet in his stockings, virile, full-blooded in every inch of him, full of the strength and passion of life. At the other end she exhibits your anæmic city religionist, diligent in his devotions, but brooding, melancholic, feeble, whom no insurance office will accept. She is asking whether these two exhibits suggest no lesson to us. Whether the defects

of the two do not suggest a possible blending; a blending of conditions and so of qualities; whether the Church's endeavours should not be to produce a whole man instead of these two separate halves of a man?

There is, we submit, no time for delay in considering these questions. If the Church persists in confining its attention to indoor religion there will soon be none even of that left. There must be more preaching in the open. More than that, there must be a new movement to the open. And it must be many-sided. Here, for one thing, religion blends with politics. It must insist, for its own sake, for life's sake, on the restoration to the populace of its inheritance of air. Our people must be brought back to their breathing-grounds; they must repossess the hills and the valleys. Any system—feudalism, landlordism, or whatever you call it—which hinders that must be destroyed. It is either that or being ourselves destroyed. We have to rebuild the English body and there is only one way of doing it. It is a breath business from beginning to end. There is fresh air enough in England for all of us if we will only arrange things properly. Our cities will have to be rebuilt with this end in view. The slum must disappear, the workshop must be ventilated, the way into the open made easy and inexpensive, the hours of confinement diminished, the hours increased in which the worker may find himself in his garden, upon his holding.

It is by coming back in such ways as these to the foundations of life, that we shall once more give religion its chance. We must provide for the higher

life by paying proper respect to the lower. We cannot with decency inculcate one side of the Divine law while openly flouting another side. We have been trying that, and we now see with what results.

It is time, we say, to end all that, and to enter instead upon a wholesale keeping of God's commandments. When, in doing so, we have built up strong men we can give them a strong religion. The English Puritan could stand services of eight or nine hours' duration, because he was all the week an open-air man ; one of a population of some five millions, with all England's air to breathe. Give us back the Puritan's limbs and lungs, and we shall get back some of the virility of his religion. It will be, in another sense, an open-air religion ; one made robust by exposure, by openness to the naked fact ; a tree of life, rooted in truth, nourished by the sun and rains of heaven, fruited with righteousness and love, the mighty nourisher of a mighty race.

VIII

PROPORTION IN RELIGION

A FEATURE in the religious life both of to-day and of past days is its curious lack of proportion. If we were to meet a man with the nose of a Cyrano de Bergerac, or with a head twice the size of his body, we should stare as at a monstrosity. In matters spiritual our eye is not so keen. Here are anomalies far greater, and we do not appear to be shocked by them. Both in individuals and in churches the religious materials are heaped together in the strangest way. You have an immense preponderance of one element, and an almost total lack of another. Here will be the vast exaggeration of an insignificant point; and there the minimising almost to nothingness of something really important. It is time we woke up to these defects of our inner artistry. It is indeed hardly too much to say that a chief element in the future progress of the race will be the reduction of this chaos to order: the bringing of these elements now so confused in their relations, into harmony with each other.

To begin with Christianity as a whole. Have we a view of it which is in a proper proportion to the universe? There is a vast confusion here, largely, it must be said, of modern origin. The enormous enlargement of the horizon in our times has put

the religious picture out of perspective. We need a new drawing on a new scale. One has to recognise that the mere widening of the sense of duration has entirely altered the view. At the beginning the primitive Church had reduced the world's time to a pin-point. History was close to its end. The final consummation was in sight. The lapse since then of nineteen centuries, during which the earth has been stolidly revolving on its axis, has disposed of that idea. But this is only a part, and a small part, of the matter. To-day we have to do not only with a time-widening in front, but with an immeasurable opening behind. Christian people, from the beginning right up to our own day, have been contemplating religious history as at most an affair of some 6,000 years. It is a period covered by the Bible and limited by it. But this encircling wall has now been broken down. Science is revealing to us a world of human beings, of people with bodies and souls, living and dying, practising their arts and their religions over periods so vast that the Bible story compared with them is a mere episode. Man, we discover, belongs not only to history, but to geology. We find the pithecanthropus in the Pliocene strata. We get indubitable remains of man buried deep with the bones of extinct animals. The old and the new stone ages, the ages of bronze and what followed, show our ancestor over periods almost beyond calculation, facing his problem, pondering in his simple way his questions of visible and invisible, of life and death.

All this, we say, requires our religion in certain aspects of it to be reset. Our six-thousand-year faith

must take on a new proportion. It no longer fills the bill. It is at most an episode in an age-long evolution. We have to unite our spiritual fortunes with those of this earlier brother of ours who existed thousands of years before our Bibles, our Churches, our theologies. If we have a soul to be saved, so had he. If we are the object of Divine ministrations, so was he. He was without hymn-book, liturgy, or any written word of Gospel, and with this prodigious lack of ecclesiastical furniture made his way from this world to the next. And yet be sure he had his Gospel. His refuge was ours ; that of the love which brought him forth and steered his way on and up to ever higher levels of thought and life. We have, we say, to fit our present Gospel into this new framework. It allies us with the Divine leisureliness, with the Divine breadth of thinking. It shows us mankind as not eternally lost, but as being eternally saved. It shows the Maker as in no panic about His work, but as lifting it from height to height by easy stages. The bringing in of the Kingdom, while inspiring our noblest efforts, demands no frantic terrors, no indecent haste. The true evangelism is a solid affair. The human salvation is not by the frenzied shout of a theologic catchword. It is the work of an eternity.

The disproportion we have here been studying is one of religious view. Let us look now at some which obtain in religious character and practice. Note, for instance, what the ecclesiastical world has made of the Christian doctrine of sin. We will not here discuss the new thought which evolution has

brought to the solution of this deep problem. We will not ask to what extent its contention is true that what we now call evil was a lower good that man has outgrown. We are not either, for a moment, seeking to minimise the deadly and ruinous quality of moral evil. We may adopt here the language of John Morley, a sufficiently free thinker, who in one of his essays speaks of "that horrid burden and impediment of the soul which the Churches call sin, and which, by whatever name we call it, is a very real catastrophe in the moral nature of man." But let us see what the Church has done with this matter of sin.

The doctrine of Jesus was one of free forgiveness. The prodigal son returns to his father's house, confesses his sin and unworthiness, and is received with joy and feasting. This, too, is the Apostolic teaching. "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The primitive Church believes in repentance and confession. "You have wronged someone; out with it, then, in frank acknowledgment; redress it, and do not repeat it." It is the simple, natural way; the way of our truest instincts. It is a way of faith, grounded in the belief that sin is nowhere, either in earth or heaven, irremediable. When we stumble we are bidden rise and still march forward. Later, there is a further development. Some strangest of human specimens, the dregs of a world's corruption, were brought under the Christian sway, and, as one might expect, there were appalling lapses. These scandals were met by a severe

discipline. Down to the beginning of the third century, the Church, in cases of adultery, whoredom, murder, or relapse into idolatry, exacted from the backslider a public confession, on pain of final exclusion from the community. This public confession became a very prominent feature in the days of the persecutions, when numbers of the weak-kneed fell away from the faith, and afterwards, stricken with remorse, sought readmission to the fold.

There is a proportion here between the fact and the treatment of it. But later that proportion disappears, and we have instead for centuries, lasting to our own day, over a vast area of Christendom, human sin and frailty made the occasion of a systematic exploitation, and of an appalling and immoral tyranny. The priest steps in ; the confessional-box is erected ; a system is introduced of private interrogatories, ranging over the entire gamut of possible and imaginable offences. To this questioning are subjected not only proved offenders, but innocent souls at the threshold of life ; young girls whose minds are sullied by the suggestion of unspeakable enormities. In the Roman confessional the text-books of Escobar and Sanchez are still in use ; text-books which deal with the crimes of one of the most corrupt and debased of European periods, the crimes possible to the soldiers of Alva, to the shameless and dissolute hordes of Wallenstein. What kind of preparation for the ministry of the Christian Gospel is the seminarist study of these and kindred works ! Is Michelet going beyond the fact when, speaking of the education of the young Catholic priesthood, he refers to the unprinted matter

contained in copybooks which is placed before the students in their last two years, asserting that while the printed matter is bad enough, " these copybooks contain what the most intrepid has never dared to publish " ?

It is indeed a melancholy study to note how in all directions the primitive, healthy religious emotions have in the history of Christendom been twisted and distorted, until what in itself was beautiful and wholesome has lost all proportion and become a danger and a deformity. Take, for instance, the story of religious passivity, of Quietism. How noble, how essentially Christian in itself is the idea of the soul becoming dead to the distractions of the world, to its own selfish impulses, in order that out of this death, a new Divine life may emerge, hushing its own turbulent voices, that in the stillness may be heard the accents of a Divine utterance ! It has been the teaching and the life of higher souls in all the Christian communities. George Fox gives it us amongst the Quakers, and Fénelon and Madame Guyon in the Church of Rome. The Methodist, the Presbyterian, every sect in short, mingles in the one common spiritual aspiration. And it is entirely good if only you will keep here the proportion of things. But how often in sect after sect, in century after century, do we see this aspiration distorted, perverted to monstrous ends ! In this higher life the self is to be annihilated, reduced to nothing. Then the thought arises that the actions of this dead self are of small consequence ; they belong not to the true self, and are a negligible quantity. So we get Antinomianism, and what has been called

" a holy sensuality." Did Molinos realise, we wonder, what would be the practical consequence of his doctrine that " God makes virtues of our vices, and these vices themselves, by which the devil seeks to overthrow us, become a ladder by which to mount to heaven " ? Did he forsee those wholesale seductions amongst communities of devotees, of which we have too abundant evidence, submitted to at the hands of their spiritual directors under the idea that all this was a discipline of perfection ?

" Spiritual directors ! " What a huge disproportion comes to view at the mention of the phrase ! In itself, how entirely natural, that the young, the weak, the unlearned should benefit by the experience of the older and the wiser—what more self-evident ? It is a law of family life, of education, of all governments, of all religions. It is implicit in all preachings, all literatures, all methods of influence and suasion. Do we note that the word " priest," so sinister to modern ears, is simply brief for presbyter, which again means an elder ? And at the Christian beginning that was all it meant. The little communities chose the elders, the men whose years gave them weight, to lead the counsels of their brethren. But ecclesiasticism, where it has full sway, has filled the once homely word with balefullest meaning. The " priest " has become the despot of souls. Where he reigns, the devotees accept him as God. Their will, their personality, their responsibility, disappear and are replaced by his own. Under this subjection one ceases to be a person. It is an automaton. And thus the travesty is accomplished by which

religion, intended to develop us to the fullest of our capacity, becomes an engine for the soul's self-destruction!

Do we wonder that the nations that have come under this sort of domination, seeing the perversion it has introduced into the soul's spiritual capacities, converting what was intended for a noble and harmonious whole into a mass of mere excrescences, should have revolted wholesale, producing what we see to-day—an unchurched and almost de-Christianised Europe? It is safe to say that if the Western world is to be reconverted to Christianity, the Church will have to cut off these monstrous growths, and to come back to the harmonies, the Divine simplicities, of the teaching of Jesus. The true religion, the religion that is to survive, is a religion of proportion. It gives its true place, its true function to every part of our being. It accords to each faculty its full rights. Instead of a system of fetters which cramp and harass, it is rather a sunshine under which the whole manhood grows to its fullest height and produces the fruitage of noblest living.

IX

OF SPIRITUAL TEACHING

WHAT is the spiritual in teaching? What are the conditions which help, and what those which hinder, its function for the soul? It will be found that the conditions are practically the same, whether the souls to be reached are those of little children on the school bench or of men and women in the full current and tumult of life. The religious teacher, whether his place be the pulpit or the school class, needs for either post to seek the same ends in his personal training, and is liable to the same mistakes about them.

It is a great advantage to us, in coming to conclusions on a subject like this, to have so long a course of religious history behind us. That history gives us facts to go upon. There has been almost every possible experiment, and we can take note of the results. For every generation has been faced with our question, and has dealt with it after its manner. We can, for our own use, sift out the mistakes. The oldest, the most common, and that which has survived longest, is the idea that scholarship, the enthusiasm for learning, for research, is in itself opposed to the spiritual, and that religion flourishes best without it. But it is a disastrous blunder to infer that the intellect is against

the soul. The story of the Church's great saints, its leaders and teachers, should be conclusive on that point. To their making, we perceive, has always gone a tough and well-fed brain. St. Paul at the beginning, Origen, Clement, Basil, Athanasius, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Wesley—the men who in successive ages stirred the religious feeling of the time, and pushed the conquests of the Cross, were all, amongst other things, centres of intellectual life, equipped with the learning of their time. They sought for knowledge as for hid treasure. They saw that truth was the surest of weapons.

It is interesting in this connection to note how devout souls, filled with the ecstasy of the spiritual life, have realised, often with pain and sorrow, that to fulfil their mission they must conquer the world's knowledge. We read in the life of Ignatius Loyola how, after his visions, his raptures of Divine communion, the drudgery of secular learning, the conning of grammars and so forth, was like passing from paradise to purgatory. But he persevered, pursuing his studies from one university to another, in the persuasion that the spiritual teacher must know his world; must equip himself, so far as he can, with all there is to know.

The religious life, in its intenser manifestation, has here indeed a tremendous difficulty. It is hard, almost impossible, to convince young enthusiasm on this point. In the heat of a revival to pour out, in fervid utterance, the tumult of the soul, how infinitely preferable to entering on dry courses of study, in which no trace of the spiritual can be discerned! But

history shows us the end of these emotions. They have all been gone through before. We know what came of the Anabaptist fervour in Germany which led a learned man like Carlstadt to declare at Wittenberg that there was no need for academic study, and which led George Mohr, the rector of the grammar school, to tell the people to take their children from school, for there would be no need of learning henceforth. "Had they not among them the Divine prophets of Zwickau—Storch, Thoma and Stübner, who were filled with the spirit and had no need of study?" We may take it as a proved fact, for all religious minds henceforth to take note of, that in the words of Professor James, "spiritual excitement takes on pathological forms whenever other interests are too few, and the intellect too narrow."

It would be difficult, indeed, to give any full description of the vagaries into which the misguided quest of the spiritual has led men at different times. It has been the parent of the wildest interpretations of Scripture. Boniface VIII. and the doctors of the middle ages imagined it an entirely spiritual rendering of the passage which speaks of Peter's carrying two swords into Gethsemane, in declaring it as signifying the twofold power, spiritual and temporal, of the popes! It was this quest which started the weird gnosticisms of the second century and the excesses of Montanus and his disciples in Phrygia. It has created sects with the oddest reasons for being. We hear of an anti-hook-and-eye movement whose votaries declared these articles of dress to be unspiritual; of a sect which placed the forefinger

on the nose during prayer; of another, in Russia, founded on the ungodliness of shaving the beard! The "grimace in religion," to use R. L. Stevenson's phrase, tricks of the voice, of the eye, queer fashions in dress, a thousand puerilities, have, one after another, been essayed as helps, or, maybe, advertisements of the spiritual life.

We have no difficulty to-day in disposing of ideas of this kind, but there are others that are not so easily got rid of. We are still, in Church and school, terribly afraid of the new knowledge. We respect the feeling, for we know it so thoroughly. But it is not spiritual. We have not reached the meaning of the word if we fail to see that truth is the holy of holies; that the search for it is a Divine vocation; that to find it is to have a new vision of God. Has it occurred to us that the new discovery, whether in physical science or the Higher Criticism, however surprising and disconcerting to us, can never be so to Him? When God is afraid of His own truth, of the facts of His own universe, it will be time for us to be.

We can base our religious feeling, our religious teaching, on nothing lower than the truth. To do otherwise is to be traitors to faith, and traitors to our fellows. One of our highest duties to the young is in these matters to teach them nothing they will have to unlearn. And that in the interests of their central life. One of the deadliest shocks to the soul is to discover that it has been deceived; that its religious teaching has been a subterfuge, a hiding, a misrepresentation of the fact. What result follows has been told for us lately in that most pathetic, pitiful narra-

tive which Mr. Edmund Gosse has given us in " Father and Son," where we have a parent, in his desperate anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his child, pressing upon him a doctrine of the Bible and of religion, which as his intellect expanded, and as he saw the world for himself, brought on a bitter and absolute revolt.

It is time, however, to come to something positive. If all this is not spiritual teaching, what then is ? A difficult question indeed, for here we are attempting to define life, a mystery that ever eludes our grasp. But we see some things here. Spiritual teaching is first of all a religious interpretation of fact. We must get the facts first. And if we approach them in the right spirit, in the true heavenly temper, we shall discover that, whatever be their kind, wherever they lie, they are full of high interpretation. For the universe is God's, and all of it speaks of Him. You cannot have too many facts ; they all contain heavenly treasure. How they all, the darkest of them, flash with meaning to the inspired heart cannot be better illustrated than by what we hold now as the very centre of the Gospel, the story of the Cross.

In itself, looked at from the common standpoint ; looked at by the populace who saw the tragedy, by the soldiers who assisted in it ; by the cowed disciples even who gazed on it from afar, the Cross was at the farthest remove from religion. It was to the mob a spectacle, to the soldiery a common execution, to the disciples a catastrophe. It was later, to souls illumined by prayer and by love that the Death on Calvary opened itself as highest life ; that these wounds revealed themselves as fountains of healing. But is

the Cross solitary here amongst facts? No; to the soul's open eye all that is around, above, beneath, within, is big with signification. All truths are in a way saving; all the verities are roads to God.

We come, however, to the gist and core of the matter when we say that spiritual teaching requires as its first condition a spiritual teacher. Unless we have ourselves breathed the upper airs, felt the things unspeakable, known in inmost soul the mystery of the Divine life, no cleverness, no learning will qualify us for this work. It is here that all the confusion has arisen. Men without scholarship but with pure humble souls have been enriched with the hid treasure and made others wealthy in the sharing. And the multitude who have felt their power, while finding others, furnished with all that academies could give them, lacking in this essential, have too easily concluded that the mental was a hindrance to the spiritual. The real point is that it can never be a substitute for it; can never be a substitute for the pure heart that sees God. What the world is in need of most of all is the sweet gracious souls who, walking with God, diffuse from their very aspect and bodily presence an influence that sets men, aye, and little children longing for goodness and for God. You meet them in the humblest ranks. Lord Shaftesbury records that he got his religion from his old Baptist nurse. He learned more from her than Archbishops could teach him. It was the old eternal mystery of life kindling life. When Libanius said of the early Christians that "they have left their tongs, mallets, and anvils to preach about the things of heaven," the sneer held

more than he knew. These "weak things of the world" were "confounding the mighty," and that because possessed of faith and love they were wielding life's highest form of power.

Whatever modifications in school or church may take place in religious teaching, this will always remain as the essential. To have the pure love of God in the soul and to diffuse that is the highest service we can render to child or to grown man. That possession carries with it a witness which none can mistake. We hear of "the religious voice." Well, there is that. *On a toujours la voix de son esprit*, says a French writer, and it is centrally true. Goodness, indeed, speaks not only by the voice but by every movement, every glance of the eye. There are to-day a hundred theories of education. Could we have in the great army of teachers who in our Sunday-schools, and to a far vaster extent in our day schools, are forming the mind of young England; could we have throughout this army as the deepest qualification the full play of the spiritual instinct—a character which made their presence in the class a felt presence of the heavenly love—we should have a surer future than any fleets or armies can give us. For national prosperity depends on character, and there is no character worth the name that is not rooted in God.

X

SHADOWS

When the sun shines, straightway our world becomes full of shadows. The mountain, the tree, the tall chimney, the running child—each casts its shadow. And as they do so they are weaving parables for us. There is nothing in the world fuller of doctrine, of high mysticism, than your shadow. It is the opposite of light, and yet it is the light that makes it. It belongs to, and takes the proportions of, the material that casts it, and yet it is of itself immaterial. The object stands itself steadfast, always in the same place and of the same size. Its shadow, on the contrary, is ever moving, ever assuming new shapes, new proportions. The shadow is always a tell-tale. Unsubstantial itself, it is an assurance of a substance not far off. When we see images of trees, banks and clouds on the still surface of the lake, we know, without looking up, that actual trees, banks and clouds are there above us.

Here, we say, are parables. The early world was not slow to recognise them as such, and to work at their interpretation. The doctrine of the shadow became from the beginning an integral part of philosophy and of theology. We remember Plato's famous

description of the human position in this world as of men in a cave, with their backs to the light, looking upon the wall in front of them, and deriving all their knowledge of reality from studying the shadows of things that were cast upon it. And, long before Plato, India had filled its soul with the conception—expressed in its Vedantic philosophy, and ruling there ever since—that the veritable world and all material things were, at best, but the shadows of a reality that was hidden behind. The view here has become, we see, strangely inverted. In the world visible to our senses it is the solid substance that casts the shadow; but in the Hindoo philosophy and in much of the mysticism derived from it, it is the material substance that is the shadow. The invisible and immaterial is the only real, the thing that counts.

Whatever we may think of that doctrine—it is a doctrine worth thinking of—we may be sure man has followed a true instinct in his treatment of the shadow element of life. It covers too wide an area of his experience to be neglected; it offers hints so pointed and so pressing that he cannot choose but take them. The surface of the soul is covered with shadows. Some of them come from very low down, and are easily traced. They are, as we shall presently see, mostly an obstruction, an unwholesome darkening, of which it were well rid. But there are others, flung from the heights, about which something very different is to be said. Everywhere, as we gaze into humanity, we discern their outlines. "There seems," says Goethe, "as it were a presentiment of the whole universe to lie in you, which by the harmonious touch of poetry,

is awakened and unfolded." Yes, the presentiment of the universe is printed in shadow upon the soul, and it is awakened by other things than poetry. The shadow, " the presentiment thrown by the universe," and found wherever human souls have awakened to full consciousness, is the sense of God, and of freedom and immortality in Him. In the Red Indian with his acknowledgment of the "Great Spirit," in the Hindoo with his derivation of all from Brahma, through all grades of civilisation, you have humanity, with varying degrees of clearness, reflecting that august image.

It is delightful indeed to watch, in all the varied races of man, this internal scenery of the soul, and to note how it offers always the same main features. The so-called pagan mind everywhere reflects the great shadow. It is the master-thought of Greeks and Latins. Aristotle and Plato are full of it. Cicero nowhere expresses himself with more heartfelt earnestness than in the *De Natura Deorum*. How intense and noble is the piety of Plutarch, how simple and entire the faith of Epictetus ! The far-off Chinese mind, when we examine it, contains the same imagery. Says Lao Tsze, speaking of the Divine nature : " From eternity to eternity its glory will never cease, for it is the union of the true, the good, and the beautiful in the highest degree of perfection." The mystics of all ages have had this shadow-world open in clearest outline before them. On their responsive soul the imprint of God and of the spiritual fatherland has bitten deepest. Jacob Boehme speaks for them all in that wonderful saying : " The heart of man is ever in quest

of the fatherland whence it has strayed away, and covets evermore a perpetual resting-place. It is always demanding where the fair homeland is, where death enters not in. It cannot be in this world, else would it have been lit on long ago."

The literature of the world, we say, testifies to this universal imprintment on the heart. The lake carries always on its surface reflections of the sky. "But they are at most only shadows," does our critic say? Yes, but the shadow never makes itself. There must be a substance somewhere. The spiritual in man is the sure pledge of a spiritual outside him. The eyes' cry for light is not more sure of a response than is the soul's cry for God.

But there are shadows and shadows, and we have to discriminate. Of those that lie on the human heart, some, we have said, are projected from very low down. They adumbrate, not celestial realities, but fog-banks —masses of vapour that have risen out of malarial swamps. Man is only now beginning to learn the true character and actual origin of some of these glooms, and to move out from under their shade. Amongst them must be numbered a good deal of what hitherto has passed for theology. Father Tyrrell in his "Mediævalism" has an excellent description of what we mean; "What I deny," says he, "is a theology that draws ideas from ideas, instead of from experience; that gives us shadows of shadows instead of shadows of reality; that wanders farther and farther from facts along the path of curious and unverified deductions; that makes itself the tyrant instead of the servant of the religious life; that im-

poses its conclusions as divinely revealed, and 'under pain of eternal damnation.'"

Theology hitherto has, in fact, consisted too largely of shadows thrown by our own mind on things. And the mind that has thrown them has been often so crude and uninstructed, so darkly superstitious. In all religions there have been exponents of the style of the Buddhist theologians who declare that Buddha's footprint appears of more or less size according to the faith of the beholder! Credulity usurps the name and place of faith. Allied with ecclesiastical authority, it prescribes belief in the incredible as essential to salvation. And there has been deeper darkness than this. Think of the horror flung on human spirits by the hell-predestination creeds that still figure in Church books—what mothers have felt who, sitting in that shadow, have wondered whether an eternal reprobation had included their little ones in its awful decree! Bewildered by these glooms, men have performed the strangest antics. We see people, in successive generations, giving up their business, deserting homes and families, under the belief of an imminent catastrophe—the work of an angry God—which was to destroy the world at a blow. A slight difference of ceremonial becomes occasion for deadliest hates. "He who takes bread of a Samaritan," was the old Jewish teaching, "is like unto him who eats the flesh of swine. . . . Let no Israelite receive a Samaritan as a proselyte; they shall have no part in the resurrection of the dead." Theology has not yet lost that Jew-Samaritan accent. It will only be when the growth of knowledge

has reached right through the general mind, and shown it the material out of which ecclesiasticism, in the ages of ignorance, has forged its fetters, that humanity will emerge from these shadows and enjoy its sunshine.

Enough, however, on that side of the topic. Let us to other and happier aspects. What a place has shadow held in history and experience ! It may be that human nature will eventually reach a height of worth and happiness in which unclouded sunshine will serve only as a ministrant to its good. But that hitherto has not been its story. Humanity has had to be baptized in the cloud. Some of its richest cultures have grown in the shade. There is a saying concerning the Concord pilgrims which has been true over a wider area : " The edge of their appetite was greater to spiritual duties at their first coming in time of wants than afterwards." " In time of wants ! " The revelations come so often in the dark. It is in the night that we are most aware of the stars.

The greatest thing this world has so far seen has been the lives of those who, for the sake of others, for the sake of ideas—of country, liberty, religion—have sacrificed their sunshine and unflinchingly faced the dark. " Everything great and good," says Fichte, " on which our present existence rests, and from which it has proceeded, exists only because noble and powerful men have resigned all the enjoyments of life for the sake of ideas." Cries Lamennais, who himself knew the cloud-baptism : " If you are not resolved to fight without cessation, to bear everything without flinching, to be never weary, to yield never—keep your fetters and give up a liberty of which you are not

worthy." It was in that spirit Mazzini and Garibaldi lived and fought for their Italy ; that Hugo accepted exile rather than the Second Empire ; that to-day the Roman Modernists, loyal to the spirit of truth, are enduring the cold shade of Papal disfavour, the harrying in which ecclesiasticism is so great a proficient, when, by subscribing what they knew to be false, they might have basked in sunshine, in the enjoyment of the highest positions. Instead they wait in the shade, knowing the future is theirs :

> For all things come by fate to flower
> At their unconquerable hour ;
> And time brings truth, and truth makes free,
> And freedom fills time's veins with power.

These heroes for love and liberty's sake plunged into shadows made by others ; plunged into them to dissipate the gloom and to secure sunshine for their fellows. Alas for the multitudes who cultivate the shades for no such reason, whose experience of shadow is so merely selfish, so ignoble ! We are most of us, at times, in that category. Half the human trouble is a gloomy anticipation of what never occurs. When the human will has been properly educated, there will be a clean sweep of these terrors. Our internal weather, as we shall then recognise, is largely of our own creation. All the volitions of all the wills in London would not secure sunshine in Fleet-street to-morrow. The clouds in that latitude have their own way with us. But the soul's sky is not exposed to these tyrannies. " I live on the sunny side of the hill," said a village preacher once in our hearing. It was a good message, and his beaming face endorsed

the words. It is the greatest of human blessings this, of being able to choose our side of the hill. Faith and love become then the clerks of the weather. Their sweet, deep-throated "All's well!" is a charm that keeps clear the face of the heavens and fills the day with light.

The greatest, the most interesting of all shadows is that cast by man himself. It is a foreshadowing. It exhibits more than his present dimensions. It throws forward the outline of his possibilities. Who shall measure *them?* Science and religion are agreed that what man is not is the greatest part of him. His power of growth compared with his present attainment is as that of the oak compared with the acorn. He is an absorbent, and the whole universe is the material he absorbs. That seems the destiny of the race; and the destiny of the individual will not be less. The Bible has written that destiny for us in imperishable words: "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

XI

OF RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHY

Good religious biography is perhaps the best religious reading. And there is a deep reason for that. For it offers us the greatest of all combinations. It is religion fused into personality. It is allied with life, and life is always the last word. To make a theory interesting you must in some way incarnate it. Puritan theology stated in the abstract lies dead on a thousand mouldering bookshelves. Woven into "Pilgrim's Progress," or into the lives of a Milton, a Cromwell, it throbs with vitality. The Gospels, our fountains of religion, are biographies—"truth embodied in a tale." A biography, however badly written is bound in a way to be original. And that because the person it portrays is original. You call Smith or Jones commonplace. No. Every man, the most ordinary, is something quite new in this universe. And the events which strike on him and help to make him are new. This soul and these affairs that conjoin with it have never been seen before and never will be again. And when religion has played a real and leading part in the story, we have the supremest of interests—that of the infinite striking upon the finite, and producing there its mysterious, sublime results.

In a sense all recorded lives are religious biographies.

We see religion in them if we look deep enough. It is there, either as a comfort or a want, a disquietude. To a sympathetic soul it is ever a matter of interest to note how the mystery of life has been accepted by our fellows; on what terms they have lived with it. The infidel, so called, is always our brother. He is a sharer with us of the fortunes of this planet. There is some entirely human reason why he came by opinions seemingly so remote from our own. Closer examination shows often enough how much nearer we are than we thought. We realise with Augustine that "*Multi intus sunt qui foris videntur:* many are in who seem to be outside." Whenever, indeed, we are disposed to be intolerant, let us remember that we who to-day fight for orthodoxy would have been burned for heretics, had we, with our present opinions, lived a few centuries ago.

Then there are men in whom one can see plainly enough the religion, but it is a religion so queerly lodged; lodged in so odd, circumscribed and draughty a tenement of temperament, circumstance, passion, and prejudice, in the midst of which the poor little spiritual faculty has to make out its living. One lingers over these strange characters; over that melancholy Piedmontese, of whom Benjamin Constant writes, who believed that God was dead; that there had been a good God who had planned things with high intent, but who had died and left everything unfinished and in confusion; over Rousseau, with such intense religious feeling, but such wild aberrations of conduct; over poor Heine, whose sardonic humour insists on overlaying his most serious moods. Do we

remember that story of his professed conversion from atheism! He had been converted, he said, from atheism by attending a meeting of atheists. "Such was the prevailing odour of brandy that what was not achieved by reason was done by the sense of smell."

It is not, however, of these lives, full as they are of their own interest, awakening in us all manner of echoes and sympathies, that we are chiefly thinking. Religion here is like radium in the pitchblende—it takes a good deal of getting at. Let us turn to those souls where the spiritual has become predominant and all-mastering; who have breathed the upper, diviner airs; who have seen God and eternity everywhere in the world and time. How significant, when we think of it, that these are a permanent feature in the order of things; permanent, for every age produces them! Men have had to create a word to express what they stand for. The word "saint" is in our vocabulary, the greatest, the richest that is there. In the darkest ages the saints shine out, exhibiting amid surrounding barbarisms the overwhelming power of sheer goodness. Always in those times the warrior, the savage bows before the saint. The wildest natures recognise in him something to reverence and to love. They appear in every rank. Here it is a Louis on the throne of France; there a Santa Zita, the humble little servant-girl of Lucca. And in every creed: here a Jesuit Francis Xavier; there an Anglican George Herbert; there a Quaker John Woolman. The Jesuits have done us a good turn in compiling that Bollandist "Acta Sanctorum" of theirs, whose

fifty odd volumes and twenty-five thousand Lives make such wondrous reading.

Our good Protestants need to enlarge their view here, and to rid themselves of the supposition that the Christian life went underground at the close of the Apostolic age, only to re-emerge at the Reformation. It has, they need to remember, been running all the time in a strong and glorious current. They ought to know about Ignatius and Polycarp and Justin Martyr; about Origen and Clement and Cyprian; about Basil and Gregory of Nazianzen and Jerome and Augustine; about Martin of Tours and St. Patrick and the Venerable Bede; about Bernard and St. Francis; about Eckhart and the Brothers of the Common Life; about the Anchoress Julian of Norwich and St. Catherine of Siena and St. Catherine of Genoa. These, out of a countless multitude less known, are examples of the saintly life, lived after the Apostolic time and before the Reformation; possessed, it is true, all of them of opinions which we no longer hold, but whose record is filled full of highest inspirations, of divine facts which no earnest soul can afford to lose. Why do not our pastors in their pulpit teaching deal more fully with these records? There is no richer vein. For are not these lives part of the Divine revelation—a revelation embodied in heaven's action and speech through elect men and women of this earth?

In saying this we are not unaware that the study has its dangers. In reading religious biography we have to remember, for instance, that we are never carried beyond half-truths. And that because spiri-

tual experiences can never be translated with exactness into current speech. When a St. Paul is caught up into the third heaven; when a Plotinus is rapt into his ecstasy; when a Boehme tells of his "seven days' sabbath of the soul," or a Wesley of his conversion experience at the Aldersgate-street meeting, what their words offer us is never more than a shadow of the reality. Between spiritual states and the dictionary there is a gulf fixed. We live here, we say, in a region of half-apprehensions.

But if, on one side, we do not get enough from our biography, there is, on another, a danger of getting too much. There is the peril of weak minds in coming into contact with a stronger. Under that imperious attraction the disciple is so apt to lose his centre of gravity and to fall prone, his own individuality clean uprooted. If we cannot commune with our great ones to better purpose than that, we had better avoid their society. At all risks and all hazards let us be ourselves. There is nothing emptier than an echo. Has not God then given *us* something to be and do, as well as to this greater one? Our business with the commanding spirits is to learn from them, to be inspired and heartened by them, but in heaven's name not be absorbed by them, not to have our own features obliterated in the vain attempt to reproduce their likeness!

Always indeed in this study we have to be on our guard. In the earlier histories especially, our critical faculty needs to be not less awake than our devotional. What strange opinions we meet with! We have to take them for what they are worth. Then there are

the legends. Some of the "Acta Sanctorum" are stuffed with miracles. Compare, for instance, the first accounts of Francis of Assisi, given by his contemporaries, with the history compiled seventy years later by Bonaventura, and you see what the mythopœic faculty can accomplish in two generations!

We escape these dilemmas in our later biographies, and they are great reading. We pity the man who does not know his Chalmers of Glasgow, his Arnold of Rugby, his John Wesley's Journal, his Baxter of Kidderminster, his Henry Martyn, his Livingstone, his Chalmers of New Guinea. But it is an endless list. Do our readers know the "Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers"? They can be had cheap, and there are few better manuals of experimental religion. The complaint of our present-day preaching is of a lack, in so much of it, of the sense of deep inner experience. Let our preachers read, or read again, of those early Methodists. If we are in want of a doctrine of prayer, we may find it in these praying men. William Bramwell was not of the first generation, but the story of his prayers is worth a dozen theoretical treatises. They are evidences, hot from the life, of what prayer is and what it can do.

It would be a grievous omission in even so brief a study of religious biography to neglect the place which woman occupies in it. For in that page we find every species of greatness; strengths of quiet endurance, marvellous gifts of spiritual intuition, enthusiasms of enterprise, often enough the statesman's grip of affairs. Of the sufferers, what a soul is that of Perpetua, the youthful martyr of Carthage,

whose courage and faith won her executioner to the Gospel; who wrote, while waiting for delivery to the wild beasts, that "her gaol had become to her as a palace, so that she would rather be there than anywhere else"; or that Huguenot woman, persecuted under Louis XIV., who, when stripped, bound with cords and whipped, declared she felt under the blows the greatest consolation of her life, since she had the honour of being whipped for the name of Christ! What a born inspirer was that sister of Basil and of Gregory of Nyssa, who won them both to the Gospel! What missionaries were those Anglo-Saxon nuns, Lioba, Walburga, and Berthgytha, who laboured with Boniface in the eighth century to evangelise Germany! What a superb figure Hildegarde, who in the eleventh century is the counsellor of bishops and monarchs! In eloquence and scholarship what say we of Rosera, who preached in Toledo Cathedral and who commented at Rome on Scotus Erigena before dumbfounded cardinals; or of Olympia Morata, who before the age of sixteen wrote dialogues in Greek and Latin in the style of Plato and Cicero, dealing with philosophy and theology! And notice that almost every great man in the Church's history has some woman behind him as his inspirer. Jerome has his Paula, Augustine his Monica, Pascal his Jacqueline. The book, for which the richest materials exist, remains yet to be written on Christianity and woman. When it is written it will be at once a surprise and a vindication.

Religious biography should be cherished by the Churches, and that in a sense and with an appli-

cation which we have not as yet touched upon. Every Church worthy of the name accumulates steadily its own materials for biography. The Church's chief business is the creation of character. In every place where the Name is honoured, whether it be cathedral or humblest village conventicle, we look to see the process going on. Sublime work of the Unseen! In the worshipping community the sacred atmosphere of devotion and trust filtering into humble souls and producing there the fruits of holy living. There is no culture comparable to this. It is the salvation of our land that for generations it has been witnessed, in crowded city, on quiet countryside. Thus every Church has its witnesses; its holy dead and its bravely living. And these are its treasures. Open on the one side to the heavens whence it draws its potencies, on this other side, the plane of the visible, it exhibits its fruits, the harvest of the regenerate. Humble names, unknown to the world, are here stored, as in an anticipatory Book of Life. Happy the Church whose fulness of sacred memory is only equalled by the richness of its living worth!

XII

THE CHURCH AS SOCIAL

A City merchant, discussing some time ago the religious question with the present writer, expressed himself as follows: "Let me be entirely frank with you. I have no faith, in the ecclesiastical sense of that term. I have lost all interest in theological questions. But I have a deep sense of the importance of the Church as a social centre." The discussion which followed was lively, but that is not our present concern. The avowal, as here given, was a striking one, and deserves all the attention we can afford it. In the opinion of this observer, the importance of the Church in modern life is not so much theological or religious as social. And by social he did not mean socialistic. He used the term in its first, ordinary meaning. We may think all this extraordinarily crude, but it suggests some questions: "How far does it represent current opinion?" "What justification is there for such a view in the actual fact of things?" "Has it any suggestion for the leaders and authorities in Church affairs?"

We do not propose here to offer categorical answers to these questions, or to the innumerable others

which the challenge suggests. And we shall not specially concern ourselves with what may be called its sceptical implications. We will not inquire how much theology there is in our present church assemblies ; how much belief, or other, in the articles of the creeds which are there recited. Let us keep to the church as social. Our merchant has supplied us with a great reminder. It is worth while asking ourselves whether either those of us who are in the church boundaries, or those who are outside, have properly understood or appreciated its social function, its social possibilities.

Whatever becomes of religion, the social bond will always remain as a chief factor in life. Nowhere do we escape its subtle power. Wherever a company of human beings is brought together, however promiscuously—in a Continental hotel, or on board an ocean liner—there straightway commences the spinning of invisible threads which bind these people together in all manner of ways. Let the contact continue long enough, and out of your hotel company, or your liner's passengers, you could construct a new civilisation. There would be love-makings, marriages, parenthoods, a fresh generation. Dr. Johnson's "propinquity, madam, propinquity," as the reason why people fall in love, covers, indeed, a very large part of that subject.

What is equally obvious is that the character of a community depends in a vital degree on the character of its social centres. Like bees, we live in swarms, and each swarm gathers round its own point of attraction. It is one of the most disturbing features of our modern life—especially where the population

is massed together in huge cities—that the older centres are being broken up, and that there has been, so far, no properly organised attempt to form new ones. In youth there is school, and perhaps college, where associations are formed which often last through life. We are looking to these more and more as amongst our chief socially regenerative forces, and the confidence, we believe, is, on the whole, not misplaced. But one can never be sure. We are not yet free in our public schools from the state of things which Pycroft in his "Oxford Memories" describes: "I was surprised to find what apt scholars in the school of vice, knowing how to commit the oldest sins in the newest kind of ways, could come together from the public schools." And on a wider view one wonders how far Carlyle's indictment of our school and college system remains true: "I perceive that our Etons and Oxfords, with their nonsense verses, college logics and broken crumbs of mere speech—which is not even English or Teutonic speech, but old Greek and Italian speech dead and buried . . . will be found a most astonishing seminary for the training of young English souls to take command in human industries, and act a valiant part under the sun."

Were conscription ever to be introduced in this country, we should have the barracks as one of our chief social centres. What this influence is on a nation's young life may be gathered from Colonel Lyautey's report of the French system. Writing in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the Colonel says: "A great many young men take away from the barracks into their families a diminished moral sense, disdain of

a simple and laborious life, and in the physical realm, habits of intemperance." There are, as the Swiss experience shows, points which tell in the other direction. But at its best militarism is assuredly not the school one would choose for educating a nation in the nobler ideals.

School and college are temporary in their influence, and when our coming citizen has emerged from them there remains the question as to the centre to which he will henceforth attach himself; from what group of his fellows he will obtain his views and derive his future connections. It is certainly not a reassuring feature in the society of our time to note the extent to which, amongst all classes, the social basis has become one of mere amusement. We are organised on clubs. Your suburban youth of to-day does not go to church. He has no interest in politics. His work in the City is a bore, to be escaped from whenever possible. Seek for his enthusiasms, and you will find them centred in his club—which plays cricket in the summer, football in the winter, and cards all the year round. Here he gets his enjoyment; finds his coterie; sees the sisters of his friends, and meets his fate with one of them. The level of his club, in all that belongs to morals, to ideals, to outlook and purpose, is the level of his life. And it is not a high one.

The story of the suburban youth is, with variations, the story of our City artisan. With him also the club is the swarm-point. It may take the form of a public-house *camaraderie;* or, as in these later years, it may be a political association which combines business

and pleasure with wonderful success. The club is the social rally ; it is the Sunday rendezvous at which the crowd assembles, not for worship, but for diversions of the music-hall order. It organises funds in cases of need. It covers the life of its members in strength and in sickness ; is a kind of Providence in life and in death. It seems, then, that people are, in these ways, finding solutions for their social problems independently of the Church, independently of Christianity.

It is time we considered what this means for the higher interests of the nation. "Religious life," says the German historian Hausrath, "is one of the most powerful motives in healthy nations, and its significance is still more strongly felt through the void left in the life of a people by its decay." It is excellently put, and Anglo-Saxondom to-day is serving for illustration of its truth. We are already supplying proof that you cannot cut man off from his highest relations without a swift-spreading atrophy of his general character. "Man," says Lamartine, in his magnificent way, "is composed of two elements—time and eternity." Divorce him from this last, and there will be an immediate shrinkage of his being on all its nobler sides.

This is the position which the Church of to-day has to face. Its outlook is upon a society which in all directions is organising itself on a non-religious basis. That is a challenge which should stir it, if anything will. For the Church is a social power or nothing. Its theology, its opinions, have been a mere incident as compared with its grasp upon, its inspiration of, the common life. Its whole business has been to grip

and combine men in the pursuit of lofty ideals, to help them govern themselves through the best that is in them. The primitive Church was founded on this basis. We read the New Testament for its directions for living. The Roman Government persecuted the Church, not for its ideas, but because it regarded it as a secret society. As we study the after-history, the same thing everywhere meets us. Where the Church helped and inspired it was not by its statements on abstract questions, which varied continually from age to age, but from its example of life. What made Bernard in his Clairvaux wilderness, and Francis, the "Poverello," at Assisi, so mighty for good in mediæval Europe was not their opinions on transubstantiation, but the standard of living they set up. And later the English Methodism gained its force, not from Wesley's views on the quinquarticular controversy, fiercely as it raged, but from the example which these banded societies offered, of a people ordering their conversation and their whole career on the basis of their relation to God and to eternity.

That is the note we have to recover for England and the English-speaking world. We cannot afford that our Anglo-Saxondom should sink out of view of its sky. A society that is organised on a basis of football or Sunday sing-songs cannot come to much. Heroes will not be born to it; it will do no great things. It would produce in time a race incapable of understanding the history of the past—that history so full of sacrifice and noble deeds. To stop this rush to Gehenna is plainly the Church's present business. From its bosom, if from anywhere, must come the

movement to rally our disorganised human host, and set it again on the upward track. It is time to stay our wrangles over the metaphysics of doctrine, and to inquire how the lead in affairs of the spiritual principle, for the time being so disastrously lost, is to be regained.

The reorganisation will have to begin at the beginning. A child's mind is the natural, beautiful home of the infinite and the eternal, and education must never dare to forget that. To rob a child of its inheritance in God is the basest of all plunderings. A mother should here be the proper teacher. "I am about to study the Fathers," said a curate once to an old-fashioned rector. "You had better study the mothers," was the gruff reply, one which, nevertheless, had considerable sense in it. The modern mother, if all accounts be true, needs to have some study bestowed on her. If, as appears, she is failing to give the sense and love of God to her child, she is dropping the noblest function of her motherhood. We have religion of sorts in our schools, and up to the age of thirteen the children have glimpses given them of the eternal foundations on which alone true lives can be built. Then, oh irony of the situation! comes the fatal break, when, at youth's supreme danger-period, with all the passions wakening and a new world opening, we fling them out of this ordered scene to find their own way in a society which has become godless!

If the Church is to regain its lost ground, it will have to stop these yawning gaps. Society begins in childhood, and grows into youth and manhood. It

will be by a big fight over the whole field of operation, but chiefly by a courageous and statesmanlike handling of the problems of childhood and youth, that the Church will again take its true place, and society throb once more under Divine inspirations.

XIII

OF THE UNRECORDED

We are apt to think of ourselves to-day as the victims of an excessive publicity. We live under the limelight. Nothing seems to escape the photographer and the journalist. Everybody appears to be writing everybody else's biography. The world itself seems over-written. With our geographies, botanies, geologies, the planet in all its phases is being described to death. So we are apt to think. But what an illusion all that is! Our pens, with all their assiduity, are scratching but the tiniest corner of existence. Despite all the ink that has been shed, our world remains as the great unrecorded. The real thing is the silence, the unknownness of the universe. The human race has for some ages now been busy interviewing it, storming it with questions. It treats its fussy little interlocutor with an amused tolerance, dropping every now and then an enigmatic reply to his query, vouchsafing him here and there glimpses into its immensity, but leaving its real mystery untouched.

The world's reticence is indeed wonderful. What has been going on for the last million years at the sun's centre; or on the far side of the moon; or at the polar circle; or in the awful subterranean caverns, miles beneath the earth's surface, through countless ages

of silence and darkness? All these things are as real as you and I. And of what we see what do we know? Who can tell the mystery hidden in yonder stone, yonder grain of sand? Even of our human race, which has been babbling ever since we knew it, how little has been really told! What histories there were before history began! Think of the battles. There is probably scarce a rood of ground on the globe's habitable parts that has not been drenched with human blood. You cannot walk a mile in town or country without passing the scenes of innumerable prehistoric heroisms, tragedies, triumphs and defeats. But they are all unwritten.

Even when our so-called records begin they tell us next to nothing. When we read the current biographies and autobiographies it is with the feeling that the real story lies behind. It is not told because it could not be. "*Est ce qu'une vie de femme se raconte?*" asks Sainte-Beuve. He might have extended the reference, have asked whether any one's life could be recorded. A man's actions can be talked about; but his centre of feeling, what he is to himself, he can never put that into words.

And, after all, how much does a man know about himself? There are, it is computed, some twenty thousand billion cells in his body, each a separate centre of incessant, for aught we know, conscious activity, working night and day at the business of keeping him alive. What knows he of this part of him? What does he know indeed of his own consciousness? Where do his thoughts come from? How is it they shape themselves this way and that?

What is the secret of his moods ? He seems the playground of countless conflicting forces, the subject of strangest possessions, his life rising from he knows not whence, running to he knows not where. He is to himself as much an unknown as the universe he lives in.

This is a rather bewildering aspect of our topic. Let us to some that are more definite and practical. It is, for instance, worth while turning to man's actual records to see what it is that he has left out. And here we at once come upon a fact with an important bearing on the question of human well-being. It is the best side of our life that is unrecorded. It is when we are hurt that we cry out. History is largely the human cry at being hurt. The newspaper is full, not of man's happiness, but of his mischances. There were a thousand enjoyable motor rides yesterday. You will hear of none of them. But the one disaster, the smash in which somebody was hurt or killed, is there in full print. An American visitor once complained bitterly to the present writer about what was published in England as American news. "One might suppose from your accounts nothing was happening there but swindles, cyclones and lynchings. Our good side, our education, religion, prosperity, wide-spread well-being, get no notice." Our friend was hardly just in his accusation. He was complaining not of the English but of the human method. It is the tragedies, not the happinesses that make history. Your forty years of quiet content offer nothing to the journalist. If to-morrow you kill your wife he will be round immediately.

Thus it is that history in a wholly misleading way has become the handmaid of the pessimist. Men read what has been written of human procedures, and find it a dismal recital. Hence diatribes about a bad and mad world, about the miseries of life, Schopenhauer's suggestions as to the desirability of universal suicide and the like. What a libel is all this ; what a sheer misrepresentation of the facts ! A libel, we say, on a world which, century after century, has spread its feasts of spring freshness, of summer brightness, of autumn glory, of winter's boisterous joys, that countless myriads have revelled in, but had no voice to describe ; a world in which age after age the children have been playing, and the young people making love, and labour been whistling at its task ; where day by day people have slept and waked, and eaten and drunk, and toiled and rested, known the fireside of indoors and heaven's glorious breath outside, and found pleasure in it all ! It is this vast mass of the unrecorded that redresses the balance and makes us, spite of what rubs and knocks are going, cry with the poet :

> The world's no blot for us,
> Nor blank ; it means intensely and means good.
> To find its meaning is my meat and drink.

It is noteworthy how the unrecorded is, in one department after another, attracting attention to-day and gaining recognition as a chief factor in our social problems. Note, for instance, what is going on in criminal procedure. In earlier times when a man had committed a crime all the interest was centred on that fact. He had done the deed and must suffer.

Sentence accordingly, and the affair was ended. But to-day the public conscience is not so soon satisfied. It has an uneasy sense of a certain responsibility for, even a sort of participation in, the man's wrong-doing. His crime is there, clearly in evidence. But it is felt to be a sequel of things that are not in evidence. We want now to know what facts there were of his environment; what neglects in his training; what traps and temptations lying across his path, that made a criminal of him instead of an honest citizen. Society is beginning to see that in these unrecorded circumstances lies the whole secret of this ill-doing, and also of its stay and remedy.

In a yet higher department, that of religion, and especially of Christianity, the unrecorded is being recognised by the best minds as a decisive factor in the situation. We are realising that if there is any purpose in the world-order there must be a purpose in its omissions—lessons of omission which we are to learn. And in particular there must be a reason why Christians and Churches have to exist spiritually on so bare a modicum of historical fact. Why is it that what we know is so small a proportion of what we want to know? We are offered glimpses, briefest and most uncertain, instead of a full view. Of the central Figure of the Gospels we ask a thousand questions which none of the narrators take the trouble to answer. What they tell us is so enigmatic, so confusing, that not a few have asked whether there is here any history at all. "Oh," cries the modern man, "for a credible witness that could settle our questions by a few authoritative statements!" But the witness is not

there. And surely his absence is not a chance one. The omissions in religious history are, we must believe, a part of religion. They are a part of our education. They are for the determining of our religious attitude towards the uncertain. They exist in order to wean us from a slavish adherence to material happenings in the time-sphere, and to transfer our allegiance to spiritual principles which are independent of time. They are our training in a knowledge of Christ which is " not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The theme is full of personal aspects. Our great recorders, for instance—poets, dramatists, historians—how little have they recorded ! How much they had to tell which is not told ! The one poem that saw the light stands for endless imaginings, inner mental wrestlings, so real to the poet, but which find no expression. Milton had in his note-books close on a hundred themes for an epic before he settled on " Paradise Lost." Gibbon toyed with one historical subject after another ere reaching the conception of the " Decline and Fall." A man's work is so often the mere fringe of the man himself. You do not suppose you have your theologian when you have read his theology ! He may be full of humour, of an infinite kindliness, the prince of story-tellers, but you get no suspicion of it in these severe definitions, these hard-bitten controversies. We read of St. Basil, founder of Monachism in Pontus, one of the most learned of the Greek Fathers, that he wrote his theological treatises in the intervals of his agricultural labour. Could we have met him we should probably have vastly preferred

the Basil of the field and hedgerow to the Basil of the treatises.

In modern controversies your public man, in taking sides, has often enough first of all to takes sides against himself. There is a minority vote inside him against the thing he votes for. What the enemy says finds a strong echo in his own mind. His unreported self is half on that side. This it is which in the present day is so extending the area of intercourse amongst supposed opponents. The believer and the sceptic find they have, in their unprinted interior, so much in common. It was under the sense of this that Bishop Creighton wrote concerning agnostics: "I have many friends of that kind, with whom I feel more at home, with whom on many points I feel in more complete agreement than with the vast multitude of those who symbolise with me."

It is when, in studying men's lives, we come to the unrecorded part of them that we see the unspeakable importance of religious conviction as a builder of character and a foundation of morals. Public law, public opinion, go a certain way, but not very far down. Nothing will so surely keep a man true at his centre as the sense of an August Companion whose intimacy is with his inmost soul, as the sense that he is ever "in the great Taskmaster's eye." That is a fine sentiment in the *De Officiis* of Cicero: "We ought to be convinced that though we could conceal any transaction from gods and men, yet that nothing avaricious should be done, nothing unjust, nothing licentious, nothing incontinent." Yes, a clean interior without help from God or man were doubtless a noble

effort. But is it not one beyond human nature? We need company there. It is only as we have a Divine partaker and inspirer of our inmost thought that from the deeps of its unrecorded a clean record can issue.

XIV

OUR PAST

The most fascinating scenery in the world for most of us is the perspective of our bygone years. It is a strictly private view. No one shares it with us. The outsider's knowledge of our past is real in its way. But it is not *our* reality. That is a thing incommunicable, untransferable. Our life is seven-eighths memory. The present is a fraction of a moment. We hold it most securely when it has become a past. And thus it is that the proper management of our past becomes one of the chief arts of living. It is common to speak of the past as something finished and irrevocable. There is a sense in which that is so ; but not the deepest sense. For as we look more narrowly we find ourselves continually reconstructing our past, painting it in new colours, making of it, in short, very much what we choose. The Roman poet had this in mind in his line :

Hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priori frui.

" It is to live twice over to be able to enjoy your past." It is the lesson of that exquisite motto which Hazlitt found on a sundial in Italy : *Horas non numero nisi serenas,* " I take note only of the shining hours."

Our Past

The manipulation of our past is a point to which we will recur later. Meanwhile, we must not forget how the past has manipulated us. We are its museum, in which are stored its relics. Some of them are queerly suggestive. We bear the marks of immemorial ages, during which our race was struggling from the sub-human to the human. Physiologists speak of a cervical formation which is the survival of gills—the breathing apparatus of our pre-human ancestry at a certain stage of its ascent. And our caudal vertebræ form a not less pointed allusion to a later progenitor. But this is a very far-off derivation of our present. What should come closer home is that debt we owe to our past for the liberties, privileges and powers which form our chief life-values to-day. One of the foremost subjects of education in both school and church for the rising generation should be that of its enormous social indebtedness. Young people, ignorant of history, are apt to take the circumstances, the mental and moral atmosphere that surrounds them, as something that has come of itself, without effort, like the rain on the grass.

They need to learn that the banquet of life, of which they are invited to partake, has been, every item of it, provided by past sufferings, by efforts, by untold heroisms. Their religion comes through a Cross; their liberty of thought and speech by imprisonments and martyrdoms, by torrents of blood shed for this cause by their fathers on battlefields; their knowledge of the universe by the labour of men who, scorning wealth and applause, sought day and night for truth, and exhibited her when found, often in the

face of the popular opprobrium. The young need to be told, as their first lesson, that they are debtors to an incredible amount ; and that the only way of discharging the debt is by the endeavour in their turn to improve the common treasure, and to hand it on, heightened and increased, to those who come after.

To return, however, to that past which we know best—our own. It is essential that we should be on good terms with it. We referred a moment ago to our power over the past. The right use of that power is, one might almost say, the beginning and end of wisdom. The essential to success in life—and one of the hardest things in the world—is the cheerful acceptance of ourselves. In youth we are spared this process. "Ourself" is not yet in being. It is in the air ; a thing of dreams, possibilities, vast desires and hopes. As the years go on the dream consolidates into fact, and the misfortune of so many of us is to be discontented with the fact. Here is Amiel, at forty-seven, talking in this fashion : "All the swarm of my juvenile hopes fled ; the outlook an increasing isolation, interior mortification, long regrets, inconsolable sadness, lugubrious old age, . . . death in the desert."

To write oneself a failure—in this fashion—is to be a failure. But what business have we to call ourselves failures ? We do not know, for one thing, a hundredth part of the reason of our being here. The horse which jogs between the shafts has probably its own ideas of life and of its own place in it. The man who drives it and the man who owns it see quite

other meanings. We, too, the biggest and smallest of us, are in the shafts, and for doubtless many other reasons than we at present discern. And even as far as we can see, if we use our senses aright, our past will be recognised as, on the whole, a good one. We say with Renan : " Everything considered, there are few situations in the vast field of existence where the balance of debt and credit does not leave a little surplus of happiness." We remember a class in moral philosophy in which a student delivered the opinion that the pains of life overbalanced its pleasures. " What ! " cried the astonished Professor, " where have you been living ? Have not your eating and drinking, your sleep at night, your waking in the morning, your breathing, your exercise, your working and resting, been each a pleasure ? " To a healthy nature assuredly yes.

It is, in fact, our impertinence that is our misery. Our demands on life are so coolly impudent. We came here with nothing, and demand everything. We are disgusted with life because we have not the brain of Newton, the strength of Sandow, or the purse of Rothschild. Whereas what we need to wonder at is the beneficence that has given us a brain at all, and two decent legs to walk upon. What if life has not put us at the top ; we have *lived*, and is not that something ? Where you are is perhaps the best place for you. Most men, despite their grumbling, really believe this, as is evident when the question arises of changing their place with another. As Sir Thomas Browne puts it : " So intrinsically is every man unto himself that some doubt may be made whether any

would exchange his being, or substantially become another man."

How insistently the course of things works for happiness is shown, amongst other things, by the way in which memory deals with our past experiences and adventures. Do you note the joy of the story-teller as he recounts the scrapes he has got into, the hair-breadth escapes he remembers? That bad quarter of an hour when he hung over the precipice, or was lost and benighted on the moor, has furnished him with a thousand good hours in telling the story. Indeed, had there been no sharp experiences, no close touches of life and death, the world would have had no good stories. Its romance, its laughter, its thrill, its pathos, have all had the tough struggle, the encounter with stern reality for starting-point. The struggle may originally have been one of hours or days. The epic that has come out of it lasts, perhaps, a thousand years. Pain, so far, has been a large ingredient in human life; but when we take "the long result of time," we discover, even in the present scene, how vast are the treasures of enjoyment hid beneath its grim exterior. When the apostle projects "the sufferings of this present time" into a future where they are to work out an unimagined glory, the splendid and daring thesis is, we realise, founded in the closest way on human experience.

There is a species of past which, as a study in consciousness, has always been a puzzle to us. It is that of the man who, perhaps late in life, turns his back on his whole previous career; repudiates the sentiments he has held and proclaimed through decades of years;

joins the enemy against whom he has expended his best energies ; curses all he has blest and blesses all he has cursed. Both political and religious life furnish us with continually recurring examples of the character, and one would vastly like to penetrate its secret. On what terms do these people live with their past ? What are their feelings when they turn over the old speeches, the old letters ? There are all moral grades amongst those who have, in this way, repudiated their former self. In the great religious conversions, as with Augustine, Bunyan, John Newton, the disposition of the convert is to place a great gulf between his present and his past, as though their several affairs belong to two different men. In this they are apt to exaggerate. The old had more good in it than the new is willing to allow, and is besides not so easily shaken off. Had Paul not been so zealous a Pharisee he had not been so earnest a Christian. Wesley before and after he met Peter Böhler and had his experience in Aldersgate Street was very much the same Wesley. It was the temperament he carried in him that made those experiences possible. One wonders what Knox in his fiery Protestant days thought of those forty-eight preceding years, a good part of which were passed as a Dominican monk !

In other instances, where men have passed from one camp to another, it would almost seem as though there were in them two opposite natures ; and that their defection resulted from the fact that the upper one, wearied with incessant fighting, had become worn out, leaving the other, fresh from its previous forced quiescence, ready and eager to assert itself,

Think of the process going on in Newman, who at one time can say, "As to the Roman Catholic system, I have ever detested it so much that I cannot detest it more by seeing it"; and who later, reviewing his career, says of it: "For years I must have had something of an habitual notion, though it was latent, . . . that my mind had not found its ultimate rest, and that in some sense or other I was on a journey." These mental and moral evolutions offer studies of profound interest; but they yield no occasion for harsh judgment. We know too little of ourselves to be able to pronounce upon our neighbour. Madame de Stael's "*tout savoir, c'est tout pardonner*" is entirely applicable here.

When we speak of being on good terms with our past, it is well to remember that what will be our past is now in our hands, and that we are manufacturing it every moment. By the time we are fifty we shall have had forced upon us, in thought and circumstance, a million times over what we were doing at twenty-five. While we *are* twenty-five we might well take note of the fact. Lord Northampton, a Lord Chancellor of the eighteenth century, who had been a very hard liver, on tottering out of court one day was overheard to say, "Confound these legs" (the term he is reported to have used was stronger); "if I had thought they were to carry a Lord Chancellor I would have taken more care of them." It is on that side of things that one's past is irrevocable. Not the most ardent wishes, nor the most full-flavoured oaths could straighten those legs. The past had put its seal on them.

Our Past

If our life has been fairly well managed, the past, as it lengthens out behind us, offers an ever-increasing store of happy prospects, of pleasant resting-places. We have here a choice of mental abodes, and we shall hardly be so inept as not to choose the best. Says Arnold, who was not an optimist :

> Time so complained of,
> Who to no one man
> Shows partiality,
> Brings round to all men
> Some undimmed hours.

Of these " undimmed hours " most of us have had our share. And it is one of heaven's choicest boons that we are enabled, by the magic of memory, to reproduce those hours, and to feel again the glow of their sunshine.

XV

LIFE'S INEXHAUSTIBLES

THERE is a difference between men which goes beyond their politics and even their religion. It is the difference between taking life on its narrow or on its broad side. There is a tendency in all of us—and some yield to it almost entirely—to concern ourselves with life's limitations, its poverties, its niggardliness. We have, we say, been so slenderly dowered, so shut in by sordid circumstance. And, in truth, multitudes have excuse enough for such laments. That side of things has pressed them hard, and it is the social task of to-day to relieve the pressure. But our individual business is not to yield to it. Where men do yield they diminish in size; they shrink as they grow older. Aristotle, whose finger was on every pulse of human nature, has sketched for us the old age which awaits them. Their temper of mind, he says in the "Rhetoric," is neither grand nor generous. "They have been so humiliated by their experience of life as to have no desire of any great or striking object, or of anything but the mere appliances of life. Property they regard as a necessity, and they have learned by experience the difficulty of acquiring it, and the facility with which it may be lost." The picture is as true to-day as when it was drawn of those

old Greeks millenniums ago. It is the exact delineation of the uninspired life and what it comes to.

And yet, assuredly, Nature did not intend us to follow this meagre model. She meant man for the life of faith, of unselfishness, of boundless generosities. She teaches this by example. When we come more closely to her, we find this to be her own habit and way of doing things. She abhors niggardliness and the close fist. The highest flights of religion, in all it inculcates of love and service without thought of reward, are there already in her own dealings with us. If we want free, happy and growing natures, we shall get them by studying life on its broader side—the side of its inexhaustibles.

In learning Nature's lesson we may begin at the bottom, with the matter of her physical resources. She is a boundless giver. As individuals we may feel poor enough, but as a race we are in contact with inconceivable riches. We are only beginning to tap the forces that lie at our service. A radium electroscope has been devised which, we are told, is calculated to go on automatically ringing a bell for thirty thousand years. And radium is only a single example of the forces locked up in matter—forces which, as we come to know them, will revolutionise our world. We use up one form of power only to come in sight of a greater. We are only at the beginning of the qualities of things. "What is a weed," says Emerson, "but a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered?" Ours is a world of whose meaning we have not yet spelled the alphabet. But every fresh letter we learn of it is a new wealth.

But material resources are, after all, only the apparatus of living. It is when we come to life itself, especially in its higher manifestations, that we recognise the whole grace and generosity of Nature's method. Her rule always is one of sheer prodigality in giving. And she lays this rule upon her children. The man of genius cannot here help himself. He must conform to her gospel of grace. And so it is that when Beethoven composes his Eroica Symphony, or Bach his Passion music, they compose for all time and all souls. That a million have been thrilled by them lessens by not a single jot their beauty, their enduring power. Herein is mystery, that a single human spirit shall open a fountain of inspiration and delight, which you drink of to the full, and a myriad of your fellows drink of, while neither they nor you in the least diminish its flow. At every point in the higher life man thus visibly links himself to the inexhaustible and the immortal.

What is true of art is true of literature. The quality of a good book is that it gives, and gives eternally. It is a friend who is always in the same humour, ready to offer you his best. We come to Scott and Dickens again and again, and find never any failure of their cheer, their high spirits. The characters that live in their pages are companions we do not tire of. How delightful to realise that Mr. Pickwick is always at hand, with the faithful Weller in immediate attendance; that Dandie Dinmont and Edie Ochiltree and Caleb Balderstone will not fail to answer to our call! Who wants novelty when with these old friends? It is that we know them so well that we are so glad

again to be with them. We want just the old tricks and turns of speech, the humours, the entire character that has made them dear to us. And thus it is, in bestowing these boons upon men, in giving them these ideal friendships which never lose their charm, that the great literary creators, by the very law of their work, enter perforce into, and form part of, the scheme of life's inexhaustibles.

And when, from his performances, we turn inward to man's central nature, we find there the same law writ large. Here, too, is an inexhaustible whose riches are in process of an eternal unfolding. The history of the human soul is the most inspiring of records. It is curious now to read Diderot's indictment of man's moral nature as a decline from and corruption of " the natural man," who, with all his passions in full play, was the true model ; the moral man figuring in contrast as an artificial creation, garrotted with obligations and duties which he was bound to obey. In our time Nietzsche has followed with a similar accusation. He complains of what he calls the " internalisation " of man, by which the primitive instincts of attack and aggression have been turned in upon himself, become a self-violation, a self-criticism and contempt, a " bad conscience." Humility, self-abnegation, self-denial, all, according to him, have an evil origin. They are the qualities of a weak race subjugated by a stronger, and compelled to turn their warlike instincts upon their own souls. Surely all this is the mere wanton perversion of history. We think better of Nature's way with man than to imagine she has so bungled him. His moral evolution has been as orderly as his physical

one. To tell us that the old barbaric selfishness is superior to our new sense of obligation and social duty, that altruism is lower than self-love, is to invert the meanings of things. The spiritual movement has been upward and not downward. Every age has added its special increment to the soul's possessions. And the march is still onward. Herbert Spencer, in a striking passage, declares that the New Testament ideal is the one our race is destined to reach by the regular process of its development. The statement would require some modification from the standpoint of theology. It is nearer, perhaps, to Condorcet's view of human perfectibility than to orthodox conceptions on this point. Yet as it stands it sounds the note both of history and of religion. Both these declare the soul to be one of the inexhaustibles, its riches to be in process of a glorious and endless unfolding.

Taking it even as it is, and apart from its prospects, humanity in itself is one of the inexhaustibles. Perpetually is it offering us some new surprise. What fresh interests are continually emerging upon its vast horizon ! Our fellow-man, looked into deeply enough, is always and everywhere wonderful. The great preachers, the great writers, come to this source and find it unfailing. Beecher loved to talk to engine-drivers, to cabmen, to sailors—to his fellow in every shape and form. So was it with Dickens and Scott. Every man you meet is full of copy, if only you can get at it. And the common man is fullest of all. Said Scott once to Lockhart : " I have read books enough, and observed and conversed with enough of eminent

and splendidly cultivated minds, but I assure you I have heard higher sentiments from the lips of poor, uneducated men and women, when exerting the spirit of severe yet gentle heroism under difficulties and afflictions, or speaking their simple thoughts as to the circumstances and lot of their friends and neighbours, than I ever met with outside the pages of the Bible."

Life, we say, is perpetually inviting us to study its broader side. It wants us to believe in it as large, romantic, heroic. Christianity, with its doctrine of boundless grace and of boundless sacrifice, is here infinitely truer to Nature, where she is properly interpreted, than are the cut-and-dried maxims of our lower common-sense. And the great spirits, fullest of the Nature-spirit, have always recognised this. They had too deep a sense of life's real magnificence to trouble greatly about its narrower side. Hear Schiller on his bodily requirements. Writing to Huber, he says: "I want nothing but a bedroom which might also be my working-room, and another chamber for receiving visits. The house-gear necessary for me are a good chest of drawers, a desk, a bed and sofa, a table and a few chairs. With these conveniences my accommodation were sufficiently provided for." Milton's cottage at Chalfont, and Wordsworth's at Grasmere, would be immeasurably too mean for the lodge of a modern millionaire. Walt Whitman, America's interpreter, lived in a boathouse, knowing himself richer than anybody on Fifth Avenue. "Nay," says Diderot, tempted with a bribe, "it were better to turn the key of one's garret, drink cold water, eat dry bread, and seek one's true self." These men found

such inexhaustibles on life's finer sides that they had no thought to waste on sordid calculations. They had, as Renan puts it, " the usufruct of the universe," and, in that possession, found themselves marvellously well off.

Our age needs to recover this temper. Men's souls, engrossed with and domineered over by life's more sordid aspects, are losing their habit of greatness. We are bestowing all our attention on the materials of living, as though they were the great affair. And they are, after all, so simple a business. It takes so little really to feed you, to cover you, to warm you ! A palace is not half so comfortable as a cottage. You can sleep as soundly on a camp bedstead as under a gold canopy. The simpler the basis on which you organise this side of existence, the freer are you for alliances with the inexhaustibles, with the things that count. Old Traherne, on his ten pounds a year and his suit of leather, is able to say, " I live a free and kingly life, as if the world were turned again into Eden." To-day, under our stifling conventions, we are serfs rather than kings.

Life, it appears, is not exhausted by death. Instead, the soul has, hid in itself, folded powers which await the liberation of that hour. The researches of modern science lead to more and more confident affirmations on this theme. More and more are they in line with that noble utterance of the Phaedo : " Wherefore I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him and hurtful rather in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life ;

who has arrayed the soul in her own proper jewels, which are temperance and justice and courage and ability and truth. Thus adorned, she is ready to go on her journey when her hour comes." That was Greece's greatest affirmation, which the New Testament, centuries after, proclaimed with yet fuller note, concerning life's inexhaustibles.

XVI

RELIGION AND HUMOUR

Religion and humour have had hitherto a somewhat dubious relationship. So far as general opinion is concerned it has hardly yet been decided whether they are friends or enemies. Where there are intimacies between the two it is often in secret, as though the acquaintance were hardly to be mentioned. A bishop's jests must be *in camera*. The story of the connection is a mixed and confusing one, but it is worth investigating, for important principles lie behind it.

Often enough in the world's history humour has seemed opposed to religion. The wits have been against it. And apparently with reason. Religion, especially in its new departures, has not been fastidious in the forms in which it has clothed itself. At times they have been grotesque enough, bulging with points for sarcasm. Early Christianity, a rural faith, propagated by peasants, appealed irresistibly to the Greek and Roman raillery. The notion of "fishermen turning theologians"; of "artisans laying aside their tongs, mallets and hammers to preach the kingdom," seemed to a Libanius, a Celsus, a Julian a jest indeed. In his "Peregrinus" the irrepressible Lucian offered his world a first-class farce.

Later we find a curious mixture. The Church,

more firmly established and accommodated to the world in which it found itself, took over many of the pagan customs and amusements, and was a patron of the local gaieties. The jester found his *rôle* under her protection. Nothing in literature is more curious than the miracle plays which, under the direct inspiration of the clergy, became a feature of mediæval Europe. Religion and broad farce were mixed up in the oddest manner. For these entertainments the stage was set up in the market-place, and monks and townspeople took a full share. It would be sometimes a drama of the other world, where heaven was represented by an elevated platform, with saints and angels represented by a row of grinning rustics in white smocks, while a gaping dragon's mouth at the corner stood for the entrance to hell, down which victims were shovelled amid the roars of the populace. The lengths to which these *farceurs* went with their mixture of religion and obscenity are almost incredible to the modern mind. Liberties were taken with the most sacred themes, and even with Deity, which it would be impossible to describe here. Yet nobody seemed to be shocked.

Later still we find the Church and the drama, with the humanists, drawing apart and assuming a growing hostility. In France Rabelais turns his enormous laugh on its doctrine of hell, while Molière by his veiled sarcasms earns the savage malediction of Bossuet. In England Prynne writes his "Histriomastix," and Jeremy Collier, in his "Short View," rebukes in unforgettable English the licence of the Restoration comedy. Our Puritans were not greatly

given to jesting. They kept their humour under strict restraint. They saw in the licence of their opponents the lengths to which a loose gaiety could lead men. Life, under the aspect in which they viewed it, was a stern affair, too full of tremendous realities to be treated lightly. They did not find much humour in the Bible. It does not seem to have occurred to them that the Jewish nation, amid which the Book grew up, was not a humorous people ; that its sacred literature was grave with the gravity of an Eastern race ; that while it has said the greatest things, it has not said everything ; that there are other revelations of God not less verifiable, and not less to be taken note of.

It is by the faculties with which God has endued men and races that He makes Himself known. He pours His thought through human brains. The Greek has taught us one set of truths, the Roman another, the Jew a third. All the sciences are branches of theology, for they show us the separate roads along which the Divine thought has travelled. And amongst these heaven-revealing gifts assuredly we cannot leave out humour. The faculty of laughter is too intrinsically human not to carry its message. It is not here by chance, nor by manufacture. It is a side of God's nature, and its revelation is immense.

It is the assurance, for one thing, that we are in a good and wholesome world. Were we under the grinding tyranny imagined of some theologists there had been no faculty of mirth. Nature would have accommodated herself to the *régime*, and shown us a world under a curse. No *anerithmon gelasma* of old ocean, no skipping of spring lambs, no grotesqueness

of parrots and monkeys, no animal fun, no merriness of children. The perception of all this is one of the later growths of humanity and one of the most precious. It is a vast relief to us to see that Nature is not always to be taken seriously ; that she likes to play with us. We are now entering into her humour. We do not take it amiss that she deluded our fathers so deliciously for thousands of years, making them believe the sun went round the earth, that there were four elements, that the world was flat, and a thousand other drolleries. She was dealing with them, we now perceive, exactly as we deal with our own children, telling them as much as they are ready to know, and laughing, as we do, in her sleeve at little mystifications which must serve the young world till it was of age to know better.

This perception of a Divine playfulness in the order of the world is beautifully expressed in that charming piece of mediæval devotion the "Ancren Riwle," where we read : "Our Lord when He suffereth us to be tried, playeth with us as the mother with her young darling. She flies from him and hideth herself, and lets him sit alone and look anxiously round and call Dame, Dame ! and weep awhile ; and then she leapeth forth laughing, with outstretched arms, and embraceth and kisseth him and wipeth his eyes. In like manner our Lord sometimes leaveth us alone. . . . And yet at that very time our dear Father loveth us never the less, but doth it for the great love He hath to us."

It was an Anglo-Saxon who wrote this, and we have now to observe that it is in the Anglo-Saxon and kindred

races that the faculty of humour, developed to a degree unknown elsewhere, has blended most perfectly with the religious spirit. Its spiritual men have been humourists. They have found humour in themselves, humour in the universe, humour in God.

In Shakespeare, who is full of theology, humour is never absent. Laughter flashes across the darkest situations. He smiles as he handles a skull. Luther, in his "Table Talk," is racy always, and merry often enough. The laughter of Ulrich von Hutten in the "Letters of Obscure Men" mightily helped on the Reformation. Our solidest men seem always to have carried their fund of drollery. "Why did you stamp, Dr. Parr?" asks Johnson, when in an argument with the old scholar. "Sir," replies Parr, "I stamped because *you* stamped; and I was resolved not to give you the advantage even of a stamp in the argument."

The characteristic is noteworthy of our English divines of all persuasions. Your cleric, whether he be Episcopalian, or Presbyterian, or Methodist, has always his fund of good stories. Is his mirth a reaction from the gravity of his professional pursuits; or from the fact that, having been looking habitually at the inmost centre of life, he has found it a centre of brightness and good cheer? Both suppositions have their truth. Altogether 'tis a pleasant feature. It has made the pulpit a homelier, a more human place. We are thankful to South for that outburst of his when, preaching before a slumbering court, he called out to Shaftesbury, "My lord! My lord!" And when the courtier awakened and rubbed his eyes, added, "I beg pardon, my lord, but I was afraid your snoring might awaken

His Majesty!" What could be more delightul than the way in which Father Taylor, of Boston, beloved of the sailors, most devoted of evangelists, extricated himself from an impossible sentence? "Brethren, I have got into this sentence, and for the life of me I cannot see how I am going to get out of it; but one thing I know—I am on the way to Zion. Hallelujah!" What a humourist was Spurgeon! We have heard him keep an audience of ministers in roars of laughter for an hour together. Yet who more fervent in devotion, more mighty in faith, more penetrated with the deepest realities!

Great natures can afford to laugh. It does them good, and the world, too. Their mirth carries its own brand with it. We never mistake it for the cackle of fools or the cynicism of soulless worldlings. It carries with it all their faith, all their sunshine. Humour in such is often sublime. It is the triumph over fear. We love Sir Thomas More for his jest on the scaffold. As we think of it we remember what Erasmus says of him: "He discourses with his friends of the life to come in such a way that one cannot fail to recognise how much his mind is in it, how good a hope he has of it." The same faith, the same new spirit, shine forth in the jest with which Basil replied to the threat of the pagan governor of Pontus to "tear out his liver"—"Thanks for the intention; where my liver is at present it has been no small annoyance." One cannot either help admiring the gaiety with which the French aristocrats in La Force and at the Conciergerie awaited the guillotine. Their lives often enough had been indifferent, but they knew how to die.

One could construct a scale of humour, an æsthetic and a moral one, containing every gradation from the highest to the lowest. At the bottom one would put the horrible buffoonery of a Judge Jeffreys before his victims ; or the laugh of Mary of Scots when she thought she had Knox in her power : " Wot ye whereat I laugh ? Yon man made me greet. I will see if I can gar him greet " ; or the mirth of her kinswoman, Mary of Lorraine, when she saw the Scottish corpses outside her castle walls. One would hardly know where to place that sad dog Antonio Perez, who was seized by the Inquisition on a charge of heresy for " having threatened to cut off God's nose." There is a humour of sheer impudence, as when Bolingbroke, a professed Deist, in order to dish his rival Harley and to pose before the Tory squires as a supporter of the Church, brought in a Bill to compel all schoolmasters to sign a declaration of devotion to the doctrines of the Establishment ! A statesman known to modern politics in his dealings with education might be regarded as having copied the jest ! There is the unconscious humour of solemnity, as when we read Hillel's scruples about the lawfulness of eating eggs laid on Sunday ; or the delicious irony, the more so for its unconsciousness, of the essay of the Abbé St. Pierre with its " Plan for making sermons useful " ! Ulfilas stands high in the ranks when, in translating the Bible for his Gothic converts, he left out the Books of Kings, alleging that " his people knew quite enough about fighting without further encouragement ! " The great missionary, we are sure, would have appreciated that American editor who, in default of other

matter, filled one of his pages with Bible passages, alleging when asked his reasons for this procedure that "he was quite sure what he had inserted would be news to most of his readers."

But this is an endless theme, which we must leave without attempting to exhaust. Let us sum up. Humour is the delight of wise men and the pitfall of fools. None of our gifts need more of grace in its use. We need to capture and train its strength for the higher service of man; its flashing beam for the discovery of folly; its lambent play for the cheer of weary hearts. True humour is full of religion. It is in itself a revelation. That we can laugh is a proof that the world is sound and that God is good. It is safe to cultivate it, for unless all the omens deceive, there will be more of it in the next world than in this.

XVII

EXTREMES

It is usual to be impatient with extremes and extremists. Aristotle's teaching of "the mean" as the criterion of virtue and well-being is still the accepted doctrine. We are to walk in the middle of the road. The fatal errors lie in the "too much" or the "too little." And, of course, there is a great deal, one might say almost everything, to be said for that view of things. Extremists are often such uncomfortable people. Humanity has from time to time expressed its sentiments concerning them by getting rid of them in the most summary manner. As a rule, our favourites are people of equable temperament. We do not care for the whirlwind characters that are in ecstasies one hour and in the depths of despair the next.

The world, we say, has received abundant provocation from its extremists, and is often enough in the right in its feeling against them. There is no denying it; the faddist is a nuisance. In most instances his obstinacy is in proportion to his ignorance. He sets up some paltry notion against the universal common-sense, and takes his isolation as evidence of his moral superiority. One reads of people who made the putting of the finger to the nose in prayer a mark of true discipleship; of a sect who denounced the

use of buttons as a worldly conformity. There are extremists who take up a particular abstinence, and, as if in revenge for what they are losing, exercise themselves in perpetual denunciation of all who do not follow. Great men even, at times, have been exasperating in their narrowness. We do not admire St. Bernard, when in a letter to Abbot William he exclaims: "We monks, who have rejected as filth all that shines bright, or sounds sweet to the ear, what fruit do we expect from such things?" We are not with him either in that other story, where, after travelling the whole day by the Lake of Geneva, he was asked what he thought of the lake scenery, and replied "What lake?" To deaden oneself to all the joy and beauty of the world is not, to the general thinking, either perfection or the way to it.

And yet, before we pass a wholesale condemnation on our extremists it were well for us to pause awhile. As we study the matter more closely some questions emerge. Does not, after all, the world-order include extremes, depend on them in fact for its results? Our equilibriums everywhere, what are they but the interplay of extremes? Our earth is kept in its orbit by the conflict between two fiercely opposing pushes, one that would sweep it outward into space and the other that seeks to hurl it into the sun. The fight between movement and inertia is the condition of organic life through all its series. In human affairs we have constant situations where a resort to extremes is the only way of keeping the balance. If you are in a boat where some of your companions insist on sitting on its far side, you will not redress matters by keeping

in the middle. The doctrine of "the mean" has broken down. You must sit on the opposite side. In the government of states, the doctrine of Polybius, that the rival forces of kingship, aristocracy and democracy, each pushing against the others, was the best preservative of stability, has received a good deal of endorsement from history.

The story, indeed, of politics, ancient and modern, is continually exhibiting to us the value of the extreme, now as a curative, now as an instrument of progress. Often the wild folly of an individual becomes the well-being of the community. Had King John shown less obstinacy we might never have had Magna Charta. Had Leo X. been less extravagant, and Tetzel less brazen, there had, perhaps, been no Reformation. We see, too, how in national affairs the medium course is so often the wrong one. Small reforms are the foes of great ones. The French Revolution is often pointed to as the fatal example of extremes. And certainly horrible things were done in the course of it. But do not let us forget that it was this Revolution, ruthless in so many ways, that swept feudalism out of France, that gave the peasant his rights, that brought the people back to the land, and that established there millions of small, well-to-do proprietors in place of a wretched crowd of tortured serfs. We in England have had no revolution of that sort. No; and we are still in the bonds of feudalism, and our agricultural labourer is, of all the countries in the West, the man with the poorest prospect—landless, helpless, the forlornest of mortals.

The great spiritual reformers have all been extremists.

It could not be otherwise. Their life was a striving for the highest, and their moral attitude was in itself a tacit condemnation of all lower levels. And this your average man resents. Aristides has to pay for being too constantly just. Socrates becomes a nuisance to his fellow Athenians, and they get rid of him accordingly. It is a splendid feature in humanity, when we think of it, these daring, almost reckless attempts to experiment upon itself; to see how much it can achieve, how much it can endure. The Indian fakir martyrising his body by the wayside; the host of Christian celibates, cenobites, ascetics—shall we not call each of them what Heine daringly called himself, a "*Ritter von dem heil'gen Geist*"? Knights of the spirit they all were, seeking inward perfection by a mastery of the body. Liguori, living in a wretched room at the back of a staircase, sleeping on stones, carrying pebbles in his shoes, with thin soup and bread three days a week for his sustenance, is to us a strange enough spectacle. The world, as a whole, would hardly prosper under such a *régime.* Yet that men, in these instances, have pressed to such extremity the principle of abstinence, have despotised the body by the sheer energy of the soul, is a fact that the human evolution could not spare. It is the demonstration, tragic if you will, against all opposing claims, that man essentially is not his senses, not his appetites, not his bodily comforts, but a spiritual which is beyond all these.

The extremes of one age are the moderation of the next. Some of us can remember the day when an abolitionist in New Orleans would have been in danger

of the tar-barrel or the bullet. To-day everybody is abolitionist. In politics, in theology, the same rule obtains. Your Conservative holds opinions that were Radical a generation ago. Modern religious orthodoxy would have been banned as most dangerous heresy by the Fathers of yesterday. The extremist is the man at the head of the column, who sees the promised land ahead, and prods his sleepy comrades when they would sink by the way, until they stagger to their feet and follow, cursing, may be, as they go. They are impossible men, these prodders, lonely, not clubbable, of whom you cannot make boon companions. But they give the world its ideals, thrill it with the new enthusiasm, and set it on fresh quests of perfection.

Christendom throughout its history has lived on extremes. For Christianity is the extremist thing the world has ever known or will know. As Mr. Chesterton, in his "Orthodoxy," puts it: "Christianity, even when watered down, is hot enough to boil all modern society to rags." In the Gospels everything is stretched beyond the average—one might almost say beyond the human. The personality of Jesus exhibits a nature that, in its qualities, goes so far and so high that theology, ever since, has been craning its neck to discover where the man ends and the God begins. And the teaching is always on the same supernormal level. It challenges men to the most astonishing tasks, endurances, renunciations. It calmly invites human nature to turn itself inside out and upside down. Its promises are on the same overtopping scale. Man is to look for perfection; his faith is to move mountains; he is to do greater

things than his Master; he is to ask to the utmost and it shall be given.

The early Church formed itself on these amazing models. It was the religion of the extremes. Its procedures horrified the established respectability. Cultured Rome called it an *exitiabilis superstitio*. A scandalised world expressed its opinion of these hotheads in terms of fire and steel. Since then the first fervours have cooled—cooling is a cosmic process which we are not to think too ill of—and Christianity has taken its place among the older stabilities as part of the world order. But it is always on fighting terms with the world. Its revolutionary fires are quenchless; ever and anon they leap into new intensity, and injustices, wrongs and impieties become their fuel.

To a superficial observation this constant antagonism might seem to have something strange and unnatural about it. These tensions are uncomfortable. But the deeper view finds nothing unnatural here; rather a closest harmony with the cosmic order. Have we not here, in fact, the clash of opposites producing the required movement and the required equilibrium? Is not this the spiritual planet held in place by centrifugal and centripetal forces? Is it not our world-boat kept upright in mid-stream by a resolute sitting on the far edge, counterbalancing in this way the heavy sag of man's lower nature, his lumpish, brute materialism? The Kingdom of Heaven must needs suffer violence, for it has a violent world to deal with. Man is a fighter; combat is the condition of his growth. And in Christianity the combat

element reaches its loftiest phase—in a fight where the spiritual principle, flung in its full stretch upon its giant opponent, grows ever mightier in the strife, until the forces it has fought against are subdued into the instrument of its reign.

The modern man has then, we say, to discriminate in his judgment of extremes. So much that is of highest value to life belongs to the category that a lenient criticism befits us towards all its forms. We never sneer at the extreme in talent and genius. The highest there commands our ready homage. And, naturally, for the homage costs us nothing. It is in the moral realm—the realm of will and purpose—that the difficulty comes. We grudge here the higher level because it condemns our lower one. So we stone the new prophet, while we build the tombs of his predecessors. It is a custom which it were time we had grown out of.

For the moral extreme is really our native air. And that because we are destined for the heights. The present normal is never our resting-place. The prophet is the reminder that we are on a journey. Do we grumble and fret at the forward impulse? In vain. The Source of our life will not be baulked of His design in us.

XVIII

CROWDS

The preacher, the politician, the publicist indeed of every sort and size, are in continual contact with the crowd. It is their working material, and their success depends on how they handle it. But do they really know that material? The question is one for us all, for life tends more and more to become that of the crowd. We are being massed together as never before. The countryside empties itself into the towns. And there we are continually being flooded by the same influences, the same magnetisms. The telegraph, the telephone, the morning and evening paper, are all fibres which bind us into closer fellowship. It becomes more and more difficult to think or act alone. We are obsessed by our neighbour. We are each one of the crowd.

All the more is it desirable that we should understand the significance of crowds, the phenomena they exhibit, the laws which govern them. For a crowd is not at all the same thing as the individuals who compose it. It is an organism, a new creation; as related to its components it is like the union of two gases which produce not a gas but a liquid. Everyone has had his own experiences of crowd life and drawn his conclusions. But, as a rule, they have not gone far,

and have been of a rule-of-thumb character. It is only lately that we have had the beginnings of a science of crowds ; the emergence of the idea that there were laws of their action of which the scientist was bound to take account. Not that this subject had been left untreated by the older thinkers. Aristotle in the " Politics " and Plato in the " Republic " and elsewhere are full of hints ; but they have nothing formulated ; and we have learned some things since their day. France has been studying the subject in its severe, analytical fashion. A generation ago the physiologist Burdach observed : " That it is time for science to give heed to phenomena which are so numerous and so well established, however strange." Since then, Gustave le Bon in his " Psychologie des Foules " and M. Tarde in " Les Crimes des Foules " have taken up the challenge, and made beginnings in what promises to be a distinct and fruitful branch of investigation. The standpoint and the conclusions of these writers are, in many respects, very different from our own. But let us note some points which seem well established.

To begin with, we need to define our crowd. An assemblage of people by itself is not necessarily a crowd. The thousands who, in a given time, pass down Fleet Street or along Broadway would form together an immense gathering, but they are not, in our sense, a crowd. For that we need not only a mass of people, but a mass possessed by one common idea. The experience is a familiar one. We know, for instance, what has happened to us when under the sway of a great orator. Entering into the audience, whose units,

at the beginning, are possessed each of his separate personality, his own thoughts and interests, we have found ourselves under the power of this single commanding soul, being fused and merged into one larger personality, ours and our neighbours—a vast organism which hears the same words, thrills to the same thought, laughs, sighs, exults and despairs together. Out of a thousand souls, for one rapt hour, there has emerged this greater—instinct with a mightier life, but to die without resurrection when the charmed voice ceases.

A crowd of this kind is usually of a special and select type, where the influences are well under control. But even here those subjected to them are aware of the play of strange new forces. Their personality has had liberties taken with it. But our decorous English public meeting, or worshipping congregation, offers only a limited and meagre view of the possibilities of crowds. It is in those epochs of history when the soul of a people has been stirred to white heat that we see the new potencies, for good or ill, that humanity in the mass can produce. Often enough in these crises the average man, merged in the crowd, sloughs off the gains of civilisation and takes on the likeness of his primitive ancestor. The crowd of which he is part is, be it remembered, for the time being anonymous and irresponsible. It is a new being which has not found its relations with law or the prescribed morality. Hence it often does monstrous things, which the members composing it would not dream of as individuals. The Jacobins who, under the French Terror, committed every atrocity, were known as

the most peacable and harmless citizens under the following *régime*. The Memoirs of Billaud-Varennes, one of the most sanguinary, contain a revealing word on this point : " The decisions," says he, " with which we are most reproached were not desired by us most often two days, one day beforehand. *The crisis alone caused them.*"

The Paris crowd at that time was hypnotised by false watchwords. Hypnotism is, in fact, a feature of these assemblies. The participants in the September massacres imagined themselves inspired by high patriotic duty. Taine justly remarks that " it was in invoking liberty and fraternity, words very popular then, that the Jacobins were able to instal a despotism worthy of Dahomey, a tribunal like that of the Inquisition ; and cause hecatombs like those of ancient Mexico."

A crowd, we see, can be ferocious, beyond the ferocity of man by himself. It is also curiously infantile. It never reaches a height of high intelligence. It is accordingly one of the most curious of illusions that truth is to be reached or advanced by assemblies, even though they be assemblies of experts. The ecclesiastical notion that a Church Council is an organ of infallibility becomes in this view too droll for words. One is irresistibly reminded of Luther's description of the Augsburg Assembly, which he likened to the gatherings of jackdaws before his window. He witnessed, he said, " the same journeying to and fro ; the clamours and pratings of the whole flock ; the wondrous preaching of the Sophists." Had we trusted to the wisdom of assemblies we should still be holding the doctrine

of a six-days' creation, and of a universe of which earth was the centre and the sun a satellite. It was not the crowd, ecclesiastic or other, but the lonely geologist, wandering with his hammer amongst the hills—Copernicus watching, with that lucid intellect, from his solitary cell the revelation of the heavens —that gave the world the truth on these points.

A crowd is the worst of witnesses. It is extraordinarily subject to illusions. The man who has its ear can make it see all he wants it to see. Erasmus has a story which hits off exactly the mental conditions in this respect. "A company was riding to Richmond, when one of the party for a joke stopped, staring at the sky : 'God avert this tragedy ! ' 'What ?' 'Can you not see that large dragon there with horns of flame and tail looped into an arch ? ' 'No ! ' But finally one, dreading to be thought short-sighted or stupid, said he saw it. Then the others in quick succession. In three days the report ran through the land of a great portent." Could we inquire carefully we should discover something similar to be the natural history of many a full-flavoured miracle testified to by a host of witnesses.

So far the psychology of the crowd does not seem to have revealed any encouraging results. One could, indeed, say much more on this head. It is notorious that young people in a herd have less conscience than the lads or lasses composing it. An Oxford don, speaking from his experience, declared that "a number of young men together have no principles, and would scout the idea of having any if it were suggested." But Oxford, let us hope, has improved since then.

It is evident, however, that men in herds are often enough lower in intelligence and in civilisation nearer to the primitive man than when alone. One is tempted to ask whether there may not be something in that queer theory recently advocated by Prince Krapotkin that primitive man derived his morality from the animals with whom he was so closely associated, and adopted the instincts of the herd as his own.

The subject has, however, another and a brighter side. A crowd can add to our humanity as well as take from it. It can and does often lift us to higher levels than we can reach ourselves. Its story is of heroisms as well as of atrocities. A great emotion shared by ten thousand stirs with a ten-thousand-fold force each breast it rolls through. At Leuthen, one of the great Frederick's most brilliant victories, there was heard from one of the columns as it marched into action the mighty strain of one of the old Lutheran hymns. "Shall we order that to cease, your Majesty?" Frederick, Voltairean and cynic that he is, knows better. "By no means; with men like these," says he to Ziethen, "don't you think I shall have victory this day?" Well he knew that the mighty impulse of religious faith, stirred to its deepest action by the solemn, stirring melody rolling through that armed mass would make each man twice his worth. Crusades, reformations, revivals have been affairs of crowds, of the lofty spiritual contagions which are engendered by the mysterious touch of man upon man.

And there seem even deeper things than these. In the Life of Henri Perreyve, that beautiful soul of the French Church, we read of his experiences as member

of an oratory in which a number of kindred spirits were gathered together. He holds that the intimacy of their communion produced mental and spiritual phenomena which showed the wonderful possibilities of the communal life. " But of a truth, in that home where we were gathered together in heart, thought and hope, how often was one positively invaded by conditions of mind emanating from another; pursued by heart-stirrings and thoughts which were the offspring of another brain ! " He thought that five or six men living together, loving one another, working together for one object, striving to carry out the apostolic words, " *Erant omnes unanimiter in eodem loco,*" would constitute an intellectual power such as we have not yet known. " Absolute experience convinces me that not only spiritual movement but also intellectual movement is, in certain cases, directly transmissible from one soul to another."

When this great realm has been more efficiently explored it will probably be found that laws and forces on an ascending scale are evolved from crowds in exact proportion to the height of life in the individuals comprising them, but differing always from the thought and action of the individuals themselves.

It is the privilege and responsibility of the leaders of men to weld, by the magic of their influence, the masses of their fellows into an organism which they can hypnotise and thrill by a word. What if the word be a wrong one ; a base appeal to material interests, a hypocrisy which conceals the sordid purpose ? How much of political inspiration has been of the sort described in " Coningsby " ! " I am all for a reli-

gious cry," said Taper. "It means nothing, and, if successful, does not interfere with business when we are in." When, on the other hand, we have a true leader, politics cease to be a sordid barter and become a religion. With the development of personality the lower features of crowd phenomena will tend to disappear. It will be less easy to gull the average man by false watchwords, to infect him with the madness of his lower neighbour, to submerge his own reason and conscience in the flood of an unworthy passion. And finally the Christian will seek a relation to the crowd like that of his Master. The modern "pusher" faces the crowd with the view of getting all he can from it. As we follow Christ our desire, on the contrary, will be to give all we can to it; to imbibe the best that life offers and teaches in order that our fellow-man, receiving this treasure from us, may profit to the utmost by our presence at his side.

XIX

THE FIGHT WITH FEAR

We have to pay for all our qualities. Man has become a thinker on no easy terms. Every faculty, while rendering its services, brings its penalties. We smart at times in them all. Amongst them, imagination, perhaps the greatest of our gifts, has levied the heaviest toll. Source of supremest felicities, it has also a supreme gift of torture. Fear is one of its products, and the story of fear, could it be written, would be surely the weirdest of human annals. Who, to take a small portion of it, could ever describe what our little people, our child minds, have gone through, alone and in the dark? Charles Lamb has put his own experience here into memorable words: "And from his little midnight pillow this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity."

When we think of the sheer suffering that fear has caused; when we remember what have been its breeding-grounds; how it has flourished on ignorance, on superstition, on cruelty and tyranny, we are apt to regard it as wholly evil, and its extirpation as one of the highest goods. That, however, is to say too much. A deeper insight will see it as indeed one of

the sternest of the human disciplines ; an inferior one, proper to inferior conditions, but one nevertheless to which we owe much.

It is a transitional feature in the human evolution. There was a time when it was not ; there will come, we may expect, a time when, in its present forms, it will cease to be. Meanwhile it has had a good deal to do with the making of us. One scarcely knows which has been the more potent, its direct action or its reaction ; its first urgencies on the soul, or the fight which the soul has put up against them, a fight which has been one of the finest human achievements. Fear, we say, is a transitional business. It belongs largely to half-knowledge. It would be a mistake to call it the child of ignorance, for pure ignorance knows no fear. If sheep and oxen suspected anything of slaughter-houses, their existence would be a burden to them. As it is, they graze in peace, and that bad five minutes at the end casts no shadow over them. In his earliest stages, man, like his brute companions, had not brain enough for self-torture. It was as he grew to self-consciousness, to his timid, unskilled attempts at observation and reflection, that his fears —birth-pains of his mental life—stirred in him.

And the fears grew. With his progress they had more and more to feed upon. To his dawning intelligence the universe on the whole seemed hostile. Its powers were at best of uncertain humour, now giving him a caress, and anon a slap in the face. The clement sky was succeeded by the thunder and the whirlwind. Water assuaged his thirst, but on occasion it would pitilessly drown him. The forest offered

nourishing plants, but others, equally fair-seeming, tortured and slew him. Everything had this clear malign other side to it. It was a world which perpetually lost its temper. Clearly there were powers which were angry with him, and which he must placate if he could. Most of the world's worship began in fear. *Timor fecit deos*—"fear made the gods" —has its truth.

Side by side with this story comes that other one of man's fight with his fear. 'Tis an inspiring history. We see our ancestor, against the outside terror, plucking up his courage. His fear ends by making a man of him. He becomes the risk-taker. He marches up to his spectres to find them harmless. As his knowledge grows, the world softens its aspect. The dreaded thunder, he discovers, is not someone's vengeful caprice, but part of the general order. The cosmic forces are on his side, if only he will take the trouble to understand them. They can crush him, but they never do it wilfully. Obey their law, and all is well. To-day man is at home in his world ; even the common man. The engine-driver, handling destructive forces, whistles at his work. His knowledge casts out fear. Even when catastrophe comes, the fact is always less formidable than appears. To fall a thousand feet down a precipice seems a terrible death. To the consciousness it is probably most like falling asleep in a feather bed. Science, the knowledge of things as they are, has cleared the earth of a myriad phantoms. It has pushed back to the farthest frontiers the dominion of fear.

We have spoken of fear as one of the lower disciplines.

It is a rudimentary way of keeping people out of mischief. But at best it is inferior as a motive, a crude appeal to our selfish instinct. It loses its place the moment a man is ready for something higher. We are coming to recognise this in every department of life. Our earlier criminal procedure was based upon terror. A century ago we dealt with crime by hanging prisoners at Newgate in batches of twenty or more every Monday morning. We know better now. Lads and girls who, at that time, would have paid for their first offence with their lives, are in institutions learning trades, surrounded with genial, wholesome influences, and under this *régime* being turned into good citizens.

The new principle is spreading like the dawn. It is showing itself in commerce. In that hitherto ruthless hurly-burly of conflicting interests we perceive a sign. A great emporium which has recently opened its doors in London announces its principle in relation to employees as one of mutual trust and goodwill. It is a revolutionary idea. Have we not heard of establishments, out of which great fortunes have been made, where the system has been one of slave-driving? Where men and women behind the counter have worked with the sense of a pitiless eye upon them; have been compelled even to lie and cheat, with the knowledge that refusal meant dismissal and the street! Are we to see in our generation these baleful shadows passing from our commerce; a new prosperity coming in based on broadspread happiness instead of on tyranny and misery?

The escape from fear is a slow process, and nowhere

more so than in our international relations. There are at present three grades of morals—the personal, the national and the international; and this last is an enormous distance behind the others. What we would not dream of thinking or of doing as between man and man we think and do without ruth as between nation and nation. The relations of this country with Germany are to-day a flagrant instance. We are each spending millions upon our suspicions, upon our fears. We are blocking social reforms, wasting the national resources and multiplying provocatives to war simply because we cannot believe in each other's common-sense. England believes Germany to be mad, Germany believes in the lunacy of England, and the two end by acting like lunatics together. It is as in the French Terror, of which an eye-witness, Mercier, says: "Terror ruled. The Convention terrified the nation, Robespierre terrified the Convention. The Romans built a temple to Fear. France should contribute a large altar to it." A future generation will write down our age as one that refused half the goods of life in its sacrifices to distrust.

In more personal matters it is strange to note the vagaries of the modern mind in respect of fear. And that among the most cultured. Men dread entirely opposite things. Huxley, from the standpoint of Agnosticism, was terrorised by the thought of annihilation. In a letter to Morley he says: "It flashes across me at all sorts of times with a sort of horror that in 1900 I shall probably know no more of what is going on than I did in 1800. I had sooner be in hell a good deal—at any rate, in one of the

upper circles, where the climate and company are not too trying. I wonder if you are plagued in the same way ? " On the other hand, we read of a French Catholic priest whose one fear was that of continued existence. In the account of a conversation in a French *salon* before the Revolution, we have the following : " They spoke of the horror we all felt for annihilation. ' Ah ! ' cried Father Hoop, ' be good enough to leave me out, if you please. I have been too uncomfortable the first time to have any wish to come back. . . . The best that can befall us is to cease to be.' " People's boasted reason goes often only a small way in combating their terrors. The queerest old-world guests, relics of antique barbarisms, lurk in the dark chambers of the mind. " I do not believe in ghosts," was the remark of a French sceptic, " but I am afraid of them." That, to-day, is a widespread mental condition. In this year of grace thousands of well-dressed, supposedly educated people refuse to walk under a ladder or to undertake a journey on Friday, and are terrorised if they spill the salt. There is as pronounced a fetishism in England as there is in Central Africa.

The mention of fetishism reminds us that religion has contributed the most impressive and instructive chapter to the story of fear and of the fight with it. All the great religions have had a discipline of fear. Hell is a word translatable into all languages and understood of all the tribes of men. And religion here, with its pictures and symbols, has followed a true instinct. There has been hell in religious literature because there is hell in the universe. As long as fire

burns and water drowns, so long we shall have to believe in certain acts having certain consequences. We may dismiss Tartarus, but that does not abolish the moral sequences. The remark of the saint about hell in Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" is pregnantly true: "I considered the men who lived without God, whose hearts were shut against the trust in and love of the Invisible, as already so unhappy that a hell of external pains appeared to promise rather an alleviation than an increase of their misery."

Fear has played a great part in the history of Christianity, often, indeed, a malign part. Barbaric peoples translated the Biblical symbolisms after their own manner, imagining that God tortured His creatures as they did their fellows. Yet all through there was a revolt against these crude interpretations. In mediæval literature one of the astonishing things is the coolness with which men took the ecclesiastic fulminations. Rabelais, who turned hell into a jest, had his predecessors. But the revolt had a nobler side. Men saw that in the grosser delineations it was forgotten that the New Testament, while appealing to fear, gives it its place as inferior and as passing. Its declaration that "perfect love casteth out fear" is the notice to quit which the higher Christian culture offers to terrorism. That sentence could not stand if any part of God's creatures were beyond the range of His love.

The nobler spirits of all ages have understood this. The woman we read of who went through the streets of Alexandria, a torch in one hand, a ewer in the other, crying, "I would burn heaven with this torch and

extinguish hell with this water in order that man might love God for Himself alone," was expressing the Church's higher mind. It is what all the mystics say in their own manner. In the " Religio Medici " the same instinct shows itself : " That terrible term [hell] hath never detained me from sin, nor do I owe any good action to the name thereof. I fear God, yet am not afraid of Him. His mercies make me ashamed of my sins before His judgments make me afraid thereof."

All which means one thing. In our spiritual evolution the fight with fear will lead to its entire purification. The fear that remains with us is the one created, not by pains and penalties, but by goodness and love. Our inward growth sets us on the watch against all that would hinder it ; and the sense of the Divine love shed abroad in our heart creates there the sacred dread lest by act or omission of ours we should grieve that infinite tenderness.

XX

OUR MULTIPLE LIFE

The question of unity and diversity, of the one and the many, has for ages furnished occasion for the highest exercise of human dialectic. It forms the subject of one of Plato's most famous dialogues. Not to have read the *Parmenides* is to be ignorant of one of the most wonderful pieces of puzzle-work the mind of man ever put together. We emerge from it with a bewildering sense of the mystery which enwraps the simplest things once you begin to think about them. With what almost diabolical ingenuity does he toss the balls in his logical juggling feat, posing his dilemmas, his antitheses, until the tormented intellect find itself lost in a maze of impossible contradictions! Since Plato's day we have had new questions raised in the same department—questions, but not answers. The mystery of the self and the not-self; of the unity of our consciousness as related to the world in which it lives, and the elements of which it is itself composed, have made the problem only the more involved. A Hume declares that we have no permanent, central self, but that consciousness is only a series of fleeting sensations. Hume has been effectively answered, but since his day new facts

have emerged which have by no means simplified matters. Let us say, as we believe, that our life is a unity, and that this is the highest truth about it. But it is certainly not less a multiple, and we obtain no proper diagnosis of it unless we keep this fact prominently in view. It is of this multiple side we propose here to speak.

One might begin with the way in which the one-and-the-many problem confronts us in our physical structure. Our body is a single organism, but it is also a universe of independent organisms, each working out its own life as really as you and I are working out ours. Physiology computes some twenty thousand billion cells in our body, all units of existence, fighting for their own hand, born, developing, decaying, dying. For aught we know each has a separate consciousness of its own. Think of the population in our blood; of those armies upon armies of phagocytes, fierce warriors who defend us against the invading host of foreign parasites! There are Waterloos being decided here of which we have no record. Truly, in another than the usual sense, we are "a host in ourselves."

When from our physical self we turn our gaze outward the problem meets us in another form. What am I in relation to this "not I," this outside world that confronts me? It is not myself, yet I should not be what I am without it. I could not see if there were not something to see. I should know nothing of weight, resistance, inertia; of numbers, qualities, forms, of the myriad things that make up my mentality were it not for this outside that thus becomes at once me and not-me. Even physically—to recur

to that—we can never tell from one moment to another what is the world and what ourselves. The breath that at this instant enters my lungs, half outside and half in—to which category does it belong? The sound that just now fills the ear; how much of it is an ether wave from without, how much an energy from within? We can never, it seems, fix our own boundaries. We are a go-between—a self and not-self in perpetual fusion.

And here, while thinking of the play of the senses in forming our multiple self, let us stay to note the incomparable wealth of life that is stored in these separate faculties. Think of what our eyesight brings us! We woke up this morning and could see. Supposing we had woke up and could not see! Could we reckon the loss in coin or banknotes? Yet probably we did not thank anybody for that gift this morning. Along that optic nerve of yours, what wealth of sensation has travelled! It has carried to you the grandeur of the Alps, the beauty of the wayside flower, the vision of your friend's face, the sublimity of the midnight sky. Within an inch or two of the eye there is the ear. They are close neighbours, yet what million worlds apart, what separate universes of existence! To think that one vibration should give us sight, and another give us the miracle of sound! Think now of these sound-riches; of Beethovens and Mozarts, the whisper of love, the delight of a child's voice! All this we woke this morning into, with a thousand other treasures that waited for our waking. And yet we call ourselves poor: we forget the immeasureable wealth of our "have" in

regret for some "have not" that we can do so well without!

The mystery of our multiple life does not diminish when, from our senses, we pass to the interior and more central forms of consciousness. Thinking of one sort or another is a process so constant with us that we hardly stay to consider the marvel of it. This clear thought in us comes from something below, out of sight, that is not clear. We who call ourselves the thinkers are very much like passengers on the deck, carried along luxuriously by toil of grimy mortals out of sight, down in the deeps of the ship's enginery and furnaces. Our consciousness is fed by a subliminal consciousness with which we are not on speaking terms, but which does the work. What is the unseen power that, as the thought-stream rolls through us, separates it here into perception, there into abstraction, yonder into memory! How does this part of us become will and that emotion? What inner vibrations are these which we call ecstasy, and those we know as despair? What is the meaning of those subpersonalities which Myers, Maxwell and others of the modern school of investigation discern in us? There seems room enough not only for ourselves, but for other "selves," who also, on occasion, may use our faculties as their own. What shall we say to the theory which holds that our personal consciousness, with its knowings and forgettings, is only a facet of a more general consciousness which holds all and forgets nothing? "Flesh, breath, and the inner self, that is all," cries Marcus Aurelius, contemplating his personality. Ah, but that "inner

self"; who shall fathom its abysses? With the world so much older and seemingly wiser than that of the great Stoic, can it see any further into the mystery?

It is a suggestive study, that of ourselves and society. When are we most truly ourselves, alone or in company? We know how easy it is to lose what we deem our proper life in the world of intercourse. Philosophers and divines have alike expatiated on the necessity of solitude as a means of finding our proper mind, nay, of saving our soul. Gregory of Nazianzen exclaims, "Therefore I have returned into myself and deem quiet the only safety of the soul." De Quincey—so different from our Church Father—is one with him here. "I have passed," says he, "more of my life in absolute and unmitigated solitude, voluntarily, and for intellectual purposes, than any person of any age whom I have ever either met with, heard of, or read of." In our own day Nietzsche complains: "Among many people I live like many, and do not think like myself. It always seems to me that they wish to banish me from myself and rob some of my soul."

We have all felt that, and yet is not the converse equally true? It is not less in society than when alone that we reach the whole of ourselves! Our neighbour, we find, is a part of our proper being. Our generosity, our justice, our affection, our wit and humour, our nonsense, were non-existent apart from him. The circle we meet in is, for the time being, a spiritual unit with a soul of its own. Just the number that are there, with their contributions of thought

and feeling, with the subtle intermingling of their separate life-currents, forms for that rapt hour a glorious entity, rich with its own elevation, its depth of feeling, its exuberance of life. Merged in its common tide, we nevertheless know ourselves as we cannot when alone. We see that the one exists for the multiple; that our separate lives are made to realise themselves fully in a participation of universal being.

Turn where we will, we find it impossible to walk alone. Our life insists on being multiple. Our actions, the things we have done, form an insistent bodyguard, helpful or otherwise. Here, close by us, is a phase of human immortality that the most sceptical of us cannot deny. Says Max Müller, in his "Vedanta Philosophy": "The belief that no act, good or bad, can be lost, is only the same belief in the moral world, that our belief in the persistence of force is in the physical world." Most true; and the thing may be said not only of our actions, but even of our omissions. What we have not done is in its way, in its effect upon us, as great an actuality as what we have done. Are not our neglects, at home and abroad, in our own soul and in society, at work upon us to-day? Dickens's description of "Tom-all-alone" in "Bleak House," is a veritable doom's picture of the desolating vitality of our social omissions: "There is not an atom of Tom's slime . . . . not one obscenity, or degradation about him, not an ignorance, not a wickedness . . . . but shall work its retribution through every order of society up to the proudest of the proud, and to the highest

of the high." Thus our deeds and our not-deeds, like invisible hosts, move with us on the march, projecting their brightness or their shadows across each foot of our onward track.

The highest on this theme remains to be said. The world's best thinking unites in the belief that the human soul is no isolated phenomenon. Its thought is an emanation from a centre of thought, the jet from a fountain, a ray from a sun. The spiritual faculties that for a time house in our body were not born there, nor will die there. They belong to a universe of their own. Penetrate deep enough into the human, says Augustine, and you will find the Divine. We are a piece of that ultimate Being which is behind all phenomena, and is itself the Eternal Reality. And that Reality also, as it shapes itself before us, as it finds its way to expression, becomes in some ineffable way a complex. Strange how the human soul in every age, turning in on itself, has found that triple image shadowed on its surface. A unity that is triune is outlined for us in the Brahmanic Upanishads, in the theology of ancient Egypt, in the Neo-Platonism of Alexandria, in the final abstractions of the Hegelian philosophy. Before the worlds the spiritual life which begat them must have had its ineffable self-communions, a love which answered love, a joy which communicated itself. And thus our multiple life finds itself the reflex and adumbration of One more august in the heavens. Let us reverence our humanity. It is the shrine and the image of Deity.

XXI

AT THE CRISIS

THERE is a significance beyond our full knowing in the crises which, here and there, have placed their mark on our human experience. Our life-stream, so placid for the most part, has had its cataracts. We meet one morning a happening such as has never occurred to us before. We emerge with its scars upon us, to be carried to our graves. And it was clearly intended that it should be so, and that none of us should escape this cosmic law.

There are, it is true, enormous differences between men in this respect. We see sheltered lives to which nothing particular seems ever to occur; and careers where, time after time, everything is at hazard. Think of Bishop Huet of the seventeenth century, who lived to be ninety and spent all his time reading books—the biggest reader, it was then computed, who had ever lived; who had absolute command of his time, who read all the day, and was read to by his servants as he went to bed at night and got up in the morning. Compare this safe, featureless existence with that, say, of a Frederick the Great, out on the warpath year after year, with three great military empires raging for his destruction! Think of those moments when, on the steeple-top at Rossbach, and,

later, on the high ridge at Leuthen, he watched through his glass the overwhelming numbers of the enemy; watched till in five minutes he had arranged his plan of battle and thought out the magnificent combinations by which the too confident enemy was tumbled into ruin!

Yet the quiet scholar, as well as the warrior monarch, will have his crises. There are cracks in his enclosure through which, any day, the fates may reach him. And the point is that he knows it. Man's singular destiny is to walk knowingly amid a thousand possibilities of catastrophe. Disaster may any hour break upon him from his own physical system, without assistance from outside; or it may meet him, in some undreamed of shape, round the next corner. These, he knows, are the allotted terms on which he must accept existence. And we may be assured they are not there without a purpose.

The nature of things which has, in this way, placed us in the firing line, exposed to every random bullet, has not, however, left us unprotected. Its system of mental adjustments is very wonderful. Nothing is more extraordinary, when one thinks of it, than the coolness with which everybody—the timid as well as the reputed brave—accepts the situation. It is an indisputable proposition that we may break our necks within two hours, or that some financial crash may involve us, or that our best friend may die. It may all or any of it happen to-day, and yet no one of us will therefore eat his breakfast with a whit less appetite, or laugh less heartily at his neighbour's joke.

Still more remarkable is the average mental attitude

when the crisis comes. There seems no circumstance, however menacing, however tragical, for which the mind has not its special adjustment. A hidden strength wells up to meet our emergency. A man will receive sentence of death from the specialist he has consulted, and will go away whistling. We require, indeed, the desperate situation to discover what is in us. At home you shudder at the thought of walking on six inches of foothold with two thousand feet of abyss beneath you. The bare idea turns you giddy. But when the task confronts you in the high Alps you do this impossible quite comfortably. You find you carry in your mind a balancing-pole which had hidden itself away till now. It is safe to say there is no position of this kind which, when it comes, excites the feeling that timidity would have expected beforehand.

It is the critical moments in our lives that are the supreme test of character. All our past at that instant rushes back upon us and flows into our will. Our habits, our training, our convictions or want of them, our disciplines, our omissions will be there, and, before we have had time to think, will dictate our action. Our moral deficiencies, however carefully concealed hitherto, will then find us out. At such hours we see what it is to have a tradition, a discipline behind us. When a British ship takes fire or strikes a rock, the passengers know how the crew will behave ; they know the captain will be the last to leave the deck. On the other hand, there are in the uncared-for hosts of our cities multitudes whom a sudden break of daily habit would utterly demoralise. Present the first

hundred men you meet in Whitechapel with a hundred pounds each, and you would have ruined half of them. There would be wild orgies, assaults, the breaking away from the work-habit till the money was gone, and then a characterless destitution. There are few of us, indeed, who could stand quite uninjured the moral surprise of a too sudden prosperity. Nature has to hold most of us in with the tightest of reins.

It is in the hour of crisis that, on the contrary, great natures show at their greatest. It requires such times to extend them to their full dimension. How easily Paul in the shipwreck stands out as the first man there ! How magnificent it is of Malesherbes when, hearing from his place of safety at Lausanne of the peril of his master, Louis XVI., in Paris, he immediately makes up his mind. " I start for Paris," knowing well that he would be going to his own doom. One thinks of a'Becket's superb coolness as he meets his assassins in Canterbury Cathedral. Is there anything in secular history comparable to the attitude of Socrates after his condemnation ? He tells his judges that his guardian spirit, which warned him of everything evil that might befall him, had not warned him of this. " What, then, do I suppose to be the reason thereof ? . . . . I think it is that what has happened to me has been a good thing, and we must have been mistaken when we supposed that death was an evil."

The crises in great men's lives are critical not for themselves only, but for the community and the time they live in. When a great spirit is working its way to a great decision, in that secret wrestle the

world's history is being made. Indeed, one is inclined to ask, with Carlyle and Nietzsche, whether history is not an affair of its great men ; whether its crises are not always of their making. Should we, for instance, have had a Reformation had there been no Luther ; had there been only an Erasmus ? Certain it is that we owe it to the leading spirits, the strong characters of a time to discern what constitutes a crisis, and to inspire their fellows to the effective handling of it. Some of us are asking with growing anxiety whether, at the point we have now reached in England, we have any amongst our so-called leaders capable of looking at the situation as the leaders of the seventeenth century, or even of the reformers of the early nineteenth century looked at theirs ? Have we not a crisis in England now ? A question as to who rules us ? But have we any commanding voice, any heroic will, that, taking all the risks, will speak as our fathers spoke ; will carry through the business which they began—the business of making England free ?

It would be a mistake, however, to think of crises as affairs only of turbulence and of public commotion. Some of the greatest are matters of silence ; transactions in the soul's innermost depths. When Ignatius Loyola, wounded at Pampeluna, to beguile his weariness, opened a book of " Lives of the Saints," he had unconsciously struck the greatest moment of his life. He is not the only one whose destiny has been sealed by the opening of a book. With others the crisis is a temptation. Most noble souls have their forty days in the wilderness, when " the kingdoms of this

world" are offered them—at a price. It is fine to see Turgot, at a time when the high places of the Church were given to libertines and infidels—when a Lomenie de Brienne is made Archbishop of Toulouse, though a confessed atheist—refusing for himself the glittering bribe. "You shall do as you will," says he to his companions; "for my own part it is impossible for me to wear a mask all my life." In such souls the inner crisis is met, not by bald reasonings, but by high instincts which instantly and decisively reject ignoble suggestions.

But those instincts themselves have to be cultivated. And this leads us to the point that, to meet worthily our own crisis, whatever it be, requires an inner preparation. What is it? Not assuredly that of foreboding, of anticipating troubles that will probably never come. Pessimism is the worst of specifics, as the habit of cheerfulness is amongst the best. But the point is, on what to ground our cheerfulness? In a world like ours, where such strange things may happen to us, what is our defence against fate? Our present age is becoming more *exigeant* than the facts allow. It has set up a cult of comfort which demands a thousand accessories before it will consent to be happy. What we need is the will to be happy on much simpler terms; on Nature's terms. And it is so easy! Nietzsche, in his Genoa sojourn, on a fruit diet, lived for £3 a month. He could have spent more had he chosen, but he found it enough. He found himself inwardly rich on the scenery, the open-air, the glorious sunshine—and his thoughts. We need not pity him.

The disciplined soul is not only garrisoned against its own crises, but has provision and strength to spare for those of its fellow. The highest call upon us is to develop resources for others. Our own victory is not complete unless it has taught also some brother man how to win. Our brother, he, too, is to be assailed with Nature's harshnesses ; is to experience life's fierce intent to make him heroic ! Then is it for us to stretch out the hand ; to add our power to his. Then are we to feel all the meaning of our poet's word :

> May I reach
> That purest heaven, be to other souls
> The cup of strength in some great agony.

In that self-devotion do we find release from our personal fears. We welcome the crisis, our neighbour's and our own, for we find in it the majesty of the life-purpose that governs us. It is evidence of the high things that are destined for him and for ourselves.

XXII

THE SKY

THERE are parts of the world where the heavens, with their blaze of perpetual sunshine, are a fierce monotony; but here in the West we get a new sky every day. During all the countless ages in which man has trodden earth in these latitudes, he has had prepared for him each morning a fresh spectacle. The poorest of us, the least travelled, is made participant in the sublimest scenery the world offers. You have only to lift your eyes from the street and you see what neither Alp nor Andes can rival. Talk of magnitudes! Here in those piled-up masses are heights which dwarf Mont Blanc, aerial snowfields nearer heaven than Mount Everest, precipices beside which the Matterhorn looks tame. The old Alpinist is indeed, as he turns his eye skyward, always finding himself at home once more among the mountains. From the stuffy city he looks out here again on all the best he has seen. Only this which he views in the sky is a grander realm than any peak or glacier he knows.

Let us, however, be entirely truthful here. There are skies which you must travel to see. The mountains, for instance, have cloud-effects which you get nowhere else. The present writer will not forget a scene

he witnessed from Beatenberg, above Interlaken, one stormy Sunday afternoon, where a thundercloud, sailing in mid-air a thousand feet beneath, as if it were a warship cleared for action, opened fire there in mid-air below, pouring from its sides broadsides of forked lightnings, while its thunders, echoed from the mountains around, filled the air with stunning roar; nor another scene when, climbing on a gloomy October afternoon in the Jura, he walked into and through the cloud, emerging on its upper side into a dazzling blaze of sunshine, while on his right lay, stretched league upon league, the upper side of the sky, ablaze with every imaginable splendour of colour, and, to crown the view, the entire range of the snowy Alps from Pilatus to Mont Blanc, rising from this gorgeous cloud foundation, as though belonging to another world.

One had there, it must be confessed, a privileged standpoint, not open to the general. Yet the sky, in its majesty and immensity, is the inheritance of us all. We are related to it as much as we are to the ground. It is our singular destiny to walk about on this easily measurable planet, dealing every hour with its measurable quantities and values, and, at the same time, to know ourselves as of this upper scene. We build our houses, our temples, domes, cupolas; and always above there is this other dome, which asks us to examine it! So much has it to say to us and so much about which it is exasperatingly silent! "*Multa tacere loquive paratus!*" Here are depths we cannot possess, but which nevertheless possess us. They form us; they are part of our being. So long

as this vastness stretches round him you can never persuade man that he is insignificant, an earthworm merely. For all the greatness of this is in him. His level is of a being who inhabits infinity and eternity.

The sky, in every age, has entered profoundly into man's religion. It was here, indeed, that he first discovered his essential unworldliness ; that he knew himself as having, in Lamennais' words, " One foot in the finite and the other in the infinite ; torn asunder not by four horses, but between two worlds." But the way in which the sky has affected him religiously has varied profoundly in the course of the years. There is all the difference between the thoughts with which the heavens inspire us to-day and those with which they filled the mind of the early world. These later times have witnessed a revelation of the heavens which has banished much earlier pseudo-revelation. The old thinking was by a foot-rule measurement, inadequate to these heights and depths. Jacob's ladder was in those days easily mountable ; but now, as Hazlitt puts it, " the heavens have moved farther off and become astronomical." It was so comfortable, well-defined, easily-managed a universe that old one, with earth as centre, heaven above and Gehenna beneath at convenient distances. To-day that old " above " and " beneath " have lost their meaning. To " ascend " from London and from Melbourne would be to go in two opposite directions. Indeed, to " ascend " from London at different hours of the day would be to pursue entirely different routes into the cosmos. And science has put this planet of

ours into its place. The poor orb has shrunk lamentably in importance; become, alas! the insignificant offshoot of an insignificant sun, one of millions mightier than itself that circle with their own attendant worlds in the immeasurable depths of space.

And science, which annihilates the old conceptions in this direction, is equally merciless in another. It knows nothing of heaven or hell; of angels, paradises, celestial hierarchies. Its instruments discover nothing different from what we see around us. The suns at the farthest rim of being are of the same stuff as ours. Everywhere to the utmost bound there are the same things; matter and force in their eternal evolution. In this view the agony of Jesus in Gethsemane would not be the old theologic agony: the pressure on the bowed Saviour's soul of a world's sin. It would be a cosmic burden; the helplessness of this crushed heart, aware of impending catastrophe, calling ineffectually to that cold universe which surrounded it, where Orion and the Pleiades shine eternally, indifferent to the sorrows of mortals. And where men measure life solely by these instruments, this is and must be the conclusion. It is the one in which France, for the present, is trying to rest. The French mind, says Renan, who knew his countrymen, is altogether in the most perfect harmony with the proportions of our planet. "It has estimated the dimensions at a glance and does not go beyond them." Emile Faguet, in his *Anticléricalisme*, speaks to the same effect. Frenchmen, he declares, are irreligious by temperament. And was it not Sainte Beuve who said, "*Dieu n'est pas français*"?

And yet humanity—even the French brand of it—can never finally rest in the planetary dimensions. There is too much sky around it for that. On this let us hear another Frenchman, one qualified as few have been to speak on the possibilities of science. Says Pasteur: "There are two men in each one of us: the scientist, he who stands with a clear field and desires to rise to the knowledge of nature through observation, experiment and reasoning; and the man of feeling, the man of belief, the man who mourns his dead children, and who cannot, alas! prove that he will see them again, but who believes that he will, and lives in that hope; the man who will not die like a vibration, but who feels that the force within him cannot die." The French scientist is right. It is that other man in us whose mysterious voice, that will not be silenced, drowns finally the too confident utterance of our sensuous and scientific self. It is the glance within that reassures us after our stupefying gaze on the outward, with its material immensities. There we find a consciousness that is bigger than time and space, for it contains them: a consciousness that suggests a deeper reality than Orion and the Pleiades; a reality to be sought not by telescope, for that is not the instrument here, but by the eyes of faith and love. For who is to say that the cosmos we see is the ultimate reality? It is all we at present see. But is that the measure? One might as well say that the oyster's universe is the true and ultimate one. It *is* to the oyster. Open in us some new window of vision, some deeper faculty of the soul, and our

world were in a moment changed. Might we not find there the truth of our poet's word that

> Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen
> Both when we sleep and when we wake ?

We should know then Gethsemane, not as a place where the bowed Solitary exposes Himself to the nakednesses of empty, silent space, but as indeed a centre of immortal destinies, object of angelic solicitudes.

The later revelations from the sky go to show that everything is on a bigger scale than our forefathers imagined. Modern astronomy makes our brain reel. To tell us that the points of light on the midnight sky are some of them so far from our world that light, travelling at 195,000 miles per second, takes centuries of time to pass from them to us, is to overwhelm the imagination. And yet this infinite scale of the visible, properly considered, is surely an argument for a larger faith ! If everything is bigger than we thought, this, surely, should be true of the higher as well as of the lower things. If the physical Universe bulks to these dimensions, what of the spiritual Universe ? We are coming only dimly to the consciousness of this last. Man is still nine-tenths animal. His evolution has, so far, advanced mainly on the lines of the physical and the sensuous. The soul's eye, which looks on the reality behind, is like that of the man in the gospels who saw men as trees walking. But the organ is growing in power, and will in time reach clear vision. Man will then know where he now guesses. He will be free of a realm of which the visible world is but an adumbration. He will find that what once existed

in him as vague, if lofty aspiration, is sheer fact. He will find that love is mightier than gravitation ; that the beatitudes are greater forces than the sun.

It is this faith in the supremacy of the highest that should keep us in the right attitude towards our sky and all it brings. On the whole, it does not seem planned for the nourishment of a sickly piety. It lets loose its forces at times in a way that is disconcerting to our pulpit suppositions. A tornado does not suggest a grandmotherly government. The world's way with us is often enough a rough, not to say a ruffianly one. As Emerson puts it : " It is no use to try to whitewash its huge mixed instrumentalities, or to dress up that terrific benefactor in the clean shirt and white neckcloth of a student of divinity." On the whole, it is wonderful that man's faith has survived his weather. As a matter of fact it has thriven upon it. It is when men are tossed by storms, when they feel the heave of earthquakes, when the sphere of the visible seems deadest against them, that they realise to the fullest their relation to God and the invisible. They feel then, as Sir Thomas Browne puts it, the presence in them of " something that was before the elements, and owes no homage to the sun."

And this disposes of the notion upheld by Buckle and other materialists that man's faith and inner life generally conform themselves in mathematical adjustment to his climate, his surrounding circumstances. These have their influence, but it is not paramount. It is not the sun's shining that makes sunshine in human breasts. It is curious, on the contrary, that the gloomiest

faiths have been bred under the most cloudless skies. We read of " the melancholy of the Greeks," a melancholy to which their literature bears sufficient witness. Sunlit Asia and Africa have produced the most pitiless of predestinations as their account of human destiny. And cheeriest souls, on the other hand, have lived under cloudiest skies. The soul has its own laws, and draws its heat and light from another source than the sun.

Meantime, as sum of the whole, in whatever climate our lot be cast, let us claim always our inheritance in the sky. We belong to it as much as to the earth. It is part of our daily prospect ; a daily reminder that our destinies are not confined to the planet we stand upon.

XXIII

WHAT IS COMING?

In every age that has been the supreme question. Man is irresistibly drawn to the not-yet. All his faculties and all his circumstances push him to the future. His past is gone and beyond him; his present is a pin-point; but what lies there in the beyond is an infinitude that waits for him, and which in all its length and breadth he will possess. The future is all so certain and yet so uncertain; it offers so enormous an appeal to the imagination; such unique material for terror and for hope. Its concealed possibilities appal and fascinate by turns. Man's attitude towards it, in successive epochs of his development, would form one of the most fruitful of historical studies. His view, in different ages, of what is coming marks the stages of his civilisation.

In earlier times, when man had little but his ignorance with which to face the void, his impressions were dictated mainly by fear. Religion, as Lucretius complains, filled the view with ghastliest shapes. The universe as a whole seemed inimical to him. The formidable unknown powers must at all costs be propitiated and their hostility bought off. Conjoined with this was the widespread idea, held by each generation in turn, of an imminent catastrophe and world-end.

It haunted the imagination of Greeks and Romans. It was the enthralling topic of the Jewish apocalypses, and it passed in its full force from Judaism to Christianity. The New Testament is evidence of how it possessed the minds of the first disciples ; and nothing is more striking in the study of the Fathers than the persistency with which each century was in succession regarded by them as the last. When the year A.D. 1000 approached men in crowds left their occupations and their homes to prepare for the great event.

In our time we have survivals of this belief. Grotesque expositions of " coming wonders," conceived in terms of the baldest materialism, are published, and find, we suppose, a public that buys and reads them. The theological Zadkiels who deal in this kind of ware revel in descriptions of blood-curdling happenings. Humanity, with the exception of a select company of favourites, is to have the worst of bad times.

Outside this circle, however, the common-sense of mankind, aided by an ever-growing knowledge of the world-order, is steadily outgrowing these primitive conceptions. We are acquiring a truer sense of proportion. A planet that has lasted so many millions of years is not likely to crumble to-morrow. Cosmic processes, in their infinite leisureliness, do not fit the impatience of our apocalyptists. Then, too, we have a new doctrine of endings. Strictly speaking, there are no such things. The most universal smash-up would mean only a readjustment of material and a new beginning. So far as we can judge of the mental condition of our catastrophists, their first instinct,

after waking up from the crash, would be to start the doctrine of another. They could not live without their "coming wonders."

The modern view, we say, is essentially different from all this. To it the future is still an enigma, but we are finding instruments for solving it. Like a problem in algebra, it becomes accessible to those who know the principles. We see, for instance, that the future is constructed out of the past. The "coming" is made out of the "come." Yet never entirely. Always, out of the infinite realm of the unrealised, a new and wonderful something is added. Nature is perpetually bringing to the birth. And delivery is preceded by periods of gestation, in which the growing life assumes in succession all manner of strange and uncouth fœtal forms. All living institutions—religion, Church, human society—witness this phenomenon. The conservative instinct in these departments revolts against the disturbance. In vain. Reproduction, the new form, the forward push, are the characteristics of everything that lives. And it is in the greatest spheres of living that they are most clearly seen.

Speaking of religion, we see throughout its sphere a great transformation going on before our eyes. So rapid is it and so far-reaching that there are not wanting observers who regard the change as an extinction, an annihilation. A well-known French writer discusses in a bulky volume "The Coming Irreligion." Another declares that in modern thought "*l'hypothèse Dieu s'elimine.*" Maeterlinck, in his latest work, thus delivers himself: "Until now men passed from a

crumbling temple into one that was building ; they left one religion to enter another ; whereas we are abandoning ours to go nowhither. That is the new phenomenon, with unknown consequences, wherein we live." That were a strange outcome truly of the human advance ; to have come out of warmth and shelter into the bare and naked wilderness ! We do not so interpret the signs of the times. Much more truly did Goethe read the riddle. We remember how in the famous passage on "the three reverences" in "Wilhelm Meister" he speaks of Christianity as "the last step to which mankind were fitted or destined to attain." "But what a task was it not only to be patient with the earth, and let it live beneath us, we appealing to a higher birthplace, but also to recognise humility and poverty, mockery and despite, disgrace and wretchedness, suffering and death ; to recognise all these things as Divine ! . . . And we may say that the Christian religion having once appeared cannot vanish ; having once assumed its Divine shape, can be subject to no dissolution."

This is not to say that Christianity is to remain for ever with us as a stereotyped system. It has never been that. As a living organism it has been changing its form through all the centuries. It has had a long succession of orthodoxies. It is at the present time in travail with a new one. Its Divine energy fits itself, in thought and deed, to each age as it comes to it. And all the mental unrest we witness to-day is simply the latest phase of that adaptive process.

If we would inquire more closely as to how the

coming Christianity will shape itself, we shall find the answer to be in a new inwardness. Yet not new, for in this it will be but reverting to its original type. Christ's Gospel was first and last an inwardness. He framed no institutions; He formulated no theological definitions; He founded no hard-and-fast ecclesiasticism. What He gave was a new spirit and a new life. Society was to be reconstructed on the principle of a renovated and heightened human nature. And this, again, is what we are coming to; this and nothing else is to be the note of the new time. It is remarkable how the most advanced free thinking of our day—thinking that in some of its forms has seemed most alien to Christianity—has, in its final judgments, to accept the Christian principle. Herbert Spencer, in his description of the social evolution, is but putting the New Testament thesis into modern words. His argument is that as civilisation progresses the government of men will be less and less an outward matter; less an affair of magistrates, police and gaols; less an appeal to force; and more and more an inwardness, in which the governing force shall be the man's own instructed conscience and will.

But how is that change to come about? It is precisely when philosophy asks the question that it reveals its own impotence, that it shows its limitations. It calls for a something which it cannot supply. Its material is theory, and what is wanted is life. It exhibits itself here, in fact, as the herald of something greater than itself; one may say as a *preparatio evangelica*. For its conclusion is a helplessness, a want, an appeal, to which the Gospel is the one answer.

It leads us in sight of the New Testament, and shows us there is nothing left but to make terms with it. It gives us for its final word, " Ye must be born again " ; and it is just there, where philosophy ends, that the Christian inwardness begins. In its secret work on the heart ; in its supply of grace and of spiritual reinforcement, it offers itself to the twentieth century as the lever for its uplift ; the one solution of its social problem.

The Christian spirit working in the best minds of the time is preparing a new social synthesis whose motto will be, " The best for all." The problem of the future will be to secure the highest, happiest type of living for every soul that lives. To this end the finest intellects will be at the service of the least endowed. We are already at the beginning of that *régime*. When we ride in an electric train ; when we listen to great music ; when we read noble poetry, we are taking shares in the world's best talent. But the principle is to spread over the whole area. Life to its utmost bounds is to be penetrated and elevated by our topmost intellect. That will give us cities without slums ; labour without excess and without unemployment ; for everyone the bliss of owning, the bliss of doing, the joy of air and sunlight and change and leisure, and the widespread, boundless mental feast. All these things are on the way. What is coming is not an evil, not a catastrophe, but an ever-heightening good. Our loftiest ideals are, as Fouillée puts it, but a presentiment of the future reality. A civilisation is yet to dawn compared with which our present one, in the words of another Frenchman, M. Levy-Bruhl,

will seem as repulsive to our descendants as that of Dahomey seems to us.

And yet—so gently has Nature dealt with us—the soul, knowing fully the poverty of "now" as compared with "then" heartily enjoys its present, is wedded to it, and seeks for no hasty exchange. Chaucer sings as merrily in the fourteenth century as does anybody in the twentieth. Sir Thomas Browne, in the seventeenth, shrinks at the prospect of life two hundred years later. It was a healthy instinct. To a wholesome nature the present has its own unique taste upon it, which we are bidden enjoy and make the most of. Jean Paul is properly inspired in his exhortation: "Make not the present a mere means of thy future: for the future is nothing but a coming present; and the present, which thou despisest, was once a future which thou desiredst!"

For the rest, our personal attitude to what is coming should be one of optimism and cheerful courage. The thing most to be feared in this life is fear. The world wants, above all things, a gospel of cheerfulness. Our future needs a clean sweep of hoary superstitions and gloomy forebodings that have darkened it. For these are false to the order of things under which we live. We are in a good universe, whose character will bear investigation, and whose promises will be kept. Our personal career, if properly ordered, forms an advance from one good thing to a better. There is no room, for instance, for pessimism in old age. Paganism it is true hails it with dread:

> Subeunt morbi, tristisque senectus,
> Et labor, et duræ inclementia mortis.

But on that once bleak territory Christianity has kindled glowing fires at which the soul can warm its hands. The nearing prospect of departure does not alarm it. Where death is feared it is always because it has been misunderstood. A nearer acquaintance puts us on good terms. Said Henri Perreyve when he began to be ill: "Unfortunately before one is dead one must die." But later he has got over that shiver; and his word now is: "You cannot think how happy I have been since you told me that I am really dying."

Altogether in view of what is coming we say *Sursum corda:* lift up your hearts. There is nothing to fear and everything to hope.

> Grow old along with me!
> The best is yet to be,
> The last of life, for which the first was made:
> Our times are in His hand
> Who saith "a whole I planned,
> Youth shows but half; trust God: see all nor be afraid!

XXIV

OPPORTUNITY

No man, in drawing up the balance-sheet of his goods and possessions, should leave out the invisible assets. He will do prodigious wrong both to himself and the world he lives in if he treats them as a negligible quantity. And amongst these intangible belongings assuredly not the least valuable are those we class under the name of opportunity. Here before you—whether you are growing lad or maiden, or harnessed man of affairs, or veteran of service—here before you lies the whole world of things. It may seem to you inert, indifferent. But that is a mistake. From end to end of it, in all its spheres it is quivering with possibility, eloquent with invitations. Every quality of the matter around you, every phase of the social world to which you belong, every event that is making its mysterious journey to meet you—all these things are a challenge, an appeal. We do not praise our world sufficiently for this magnificence of its possibilities. We are, so far, only beginning with them. All that has been done, possessed, discovered, does not diminish but enormously increases the sum of things yet to be done and discovered and possessed. The size of our opportunities is an equation between our own size and that of the universe in

which we are placed. When Alexander set out from Macedon on his career of world-conquest, he gave away what he had with so lavish a hand that a friend asked him, " But what are you leaving for yourself ? " " My hopes," was the reply. He trusted in his invisible asset.

Opportunity enters into our life on so vast a scale that we need to study very carefully the use and the ethic of it. There is no surer test of character than is here offered. Place a man up against his chances and you will speedily learn the stuff of which he is made. There is, for instance, a large and, we fear, a growing class whose relation to opportunity is that of idly waiting on outside events. The world is to be obliging enough to do for them what they refuse to do for themselves. They are the devotees of luck. Like Mr. Micawber, they expect " something to turn up." A modern French writer observes : " Aujourdhui l'homme désire immensément, mais il veut faiblement." " To-day man has enormous desires but a feeble will." It is too true. We have a generation growing up in middle-class homes, bred and brought up in comfort, whose expectations are in inverse ratio to their exertions. They have no notion of beginning as their fathers began. Instead, they are possessed with the " get rich quick " idea, and the method of it is to be, not by toil, but by plunges and hazards of fortune ; extravagance on the one side to be met by wild gambles on the other. But this is a misreading of the cosmic regulations so impudent and ignorant, a contempt of court, one may say, so flagrant, as to involve the heaviest penalties sooner

or later. Whoever thinks the universe offers a premium on idleness will find out his mistake. To open your mouth is not enough. The nation that breeds to excess this class of opportunists is on its way to bankruptcy. There are far too many of them in evidence just now amongst ourselves.

Then, to men of character and ability there come opportunities to what we may call life's lower successes, the acceptance of which, they see clearly, would close their way to the higher ones. "All the kingdoms of this world." That glittering bait is perpetually being dangled before the nobler souls. To exchange it for a cross is no small business. It is curious to remember, in the light of what actually happened, that both John Knox and Richard Baxter were in their time offered bishoprics in the Church of England. How glad we are they refused! How much poorer had been the religious history of both Scotland and England had these men found their success in great ecclesiastical preferment! We love Spinoza for declining the fortune that was offered him; and Diderot for saying "No" to Empress Catherine's offered bribe of a hundred thousand francs a year to become a member of her Court; and Faraday for saying "he could not afford to be rich," and Cobden for standing out against Palmerston's offer of a baronetcy and a seat in his Cabinet. Gold weighed heavy then as now, but it did not outweigh these men's souls. Their real opportunities lay on another and a higher plane, and they could not sacrifice them to lower gains.

Yes, for all of us opportunity is so often the tempter. To many men the clearest inner evidence of a Divine

leading is in the way in which, at critical moments, they have been saved from their opportunities. There have been, they recognise, times in which, possessed by a morbid unwholesome mood, they were the ready prey of evil. Had the opening offered itself at the moment, they were lost. It seemed the inopportuneness of the outer event that alone saved them. At other times, had inclination chimed with the chances for evil paraded before them the ruin had been equally certain. That in the one case opportunity, and in the other inclination were wanting, is by many a man who to-day marches in the foremost files attributed, with humble and awed acknowledgment, to a Guidance and a Strength beyond his own.

For good or ill the main seat of opportunity is in ourselves. A certain kind of nature attracts a certain kind of event. There are things that can never happen to some men. It requires a certain level of character and quality to be in the way of them. And thus it is that in proportion as we widen and deepen our nature do we increase our area of opportunity. We have by so much broadened the surface upon which favouring events may strike. Says Emerson, "As many languages as he has, as many friends, as many arts and trades, so many times is he a man."

Nature is powerless to help us until we help ourselves. With her store of riches she waits and waits for the men who will use them. All the Scottish scenery and Scottish history are there, but no man finds his opportunity in them till Scott comes along and makes out of them his glorious creations. Kidderminster, in the seventeenth century a dull little country

town, has a curate who can make nothing of it as a scene of spiritual activity. He ekes out a livelihood by mean employments, and preaches now and then to a scant audience, who regard his performance with pity and contempt. To him succeeds another cleric, hight Richard Baxter, who, with the same streets to walk down and the same people to deal with, makes the place a name for all time as an ideal of pastoral success. Oberlin is a country pastor; his lot cast in a desolate valley of the Vosges. There are men who, in so forsaken a place, would have used all their energies to get out of it. Oberlin plants himself there for life, and transforms his wilderness into a moral and industrial paradise. It is, indeed, precisely in the circumstances that seem most adverse that the capable man finds his opportunity. It was the deplorable religious condition of England in the eighteenth century that, humanly speaking, made the fortune of Wesley as an evangelist. The opportunity was in the work to be done.

So varied is our nature, so multiple in its forms and interests, that there is no condition in which we may find ourselves but offers its own opportunity. Failure is often amongst our best happenings. It tests us; shows us our weak points; puts us off the wrong track and opens to us the right one. In religious history nothing is more remarkable than the way in which seeming disaster becomes the occasion of spiritual extension. The *Acts of the Apostles* relates how the persecution that rose about Stephen turned the Jerusalem Church into an army of evangelists. Later on we read how the shipwreck of

two young travellers, Frumentius and Ædesius, led to the founding of the Abyssinian and Ethiopian Church. The Church of Georgia in the Caucasus owed itself to a poor woman, Nonna or Nina, who had been taken there as a captive. It was the persecution of the Syrian Nestorians that made them successful missionaries, spreading the faith to the far North and East. And it was the Mongol invasion of Russia in the thirteenth century that drove multitudes of her Christian people north and east, out of reach of their oppressors, where amongst hitherto unreached tribes they spread the news of the Gospel.

Thus has external adversity been age after age the occasion of inner growth. And not only so. As we look deeper into things we perceive how what seem our spiritual difficulties and poverties have been really our opportunity. Kant points out in his " Practical Reason " how, if God were always certainly and patently present to us, " there would be such excess of motive as practically to override our freedom." We need the invisible, not the visible God for character. It is here, indeed, that we discern the meaning of all the doubts, the uncertainties, the lack of positive evidence that beset us on the way to faith. If the road were plain, we could get there easily enough. But where would be our training? It is not the turnpike, but the trackless wild, with the peak in the distance and the star overhead to steer by, that are the making of climbers. We have all the evidence we need for developing a noble and spiritual manhood.

We will not, then, quarrel with to-day, for whatever else it lacks it is full of opportunity. Has it dawned for

us upon a hard, bare, seemingly hopeless condition? At least it has left us the opportunity of patience, of inner development—the opportunity, in short, of being good. We can to-day be cheerful, helpful, serviceable. Do you need comfort? Find it in comforting someone else. It is a sure way. On this whole theme let us hear Marcus Aurelius in one of his finest sayings: "Can that which has befallen you possibly prevent you from being just, lofty, temperate? Remember, then, henceforth to apply this principle—not 'the thing is a misfortune,' but 'to bear it bravely is good fortune.'"

XXV

THE NEW GENERATION

THERE is a saying of Carlyle that the greatest hope of our world lies in the certainty of heroes being born into it. That is indeed a glorious certainty, but the reference might be enlarged. Birth itself, we venture to say, not of heroes only, but of the generations in their succession, is the infinitely hopeful thing. It is the guarantee that the world will never grow old, that it will never stand still, that no halt is to be called in its eternal progress. Youth is the perpetual miracle which keeps the rest of us on tip-toe. We never know what will come of it. Nothing else contains surprises so incalculable, so enormous. When you have found out radium you have found it out for ever. Ten thousand years hence it will do what it does to-day, and no more. The youth in the street is not in that category. He may be a replica of his father. He may be as different from him as though he had come from another planet. This incalculableness belongs to whole peoples. We read of Japanese families that trace their descent back through eighty generations. Through seventy-nine of them there is a steady transmission of the same traditions, the same habits. The eightieth, as we have seen in our time, turns right round, drops its old beliefs, and

clothes itself with a new and alien civilisation. Think of that new generation in the France of the eighteenth century! All the old institutions were there—beliefs, customs, transmitted for ages from father to son—the Church with its teachings, aristocracy, feudalism, linked in one compact system. But this fresh set of souls comes on the stage, born, as it seems, with new eyes and new ears. Deaf to all that has gone before, its heart is set on the new doctrine, the doctrine of a Bayle, a Rousseau, a Condorcet, a Voltaire. That birth-time was the knell of a world.

The new generation is, if we may use the phrase, always the greatest of gambles. From Plato down to our Mr. Galton the world has, with more or less seriousness, discussed the subject of Eugenics, the science, that is, of good births. If only, have said our philosophers, we could breed men and women on the same scientific principles as we breed dogs and horses, how easy the solution of the human problem! Plato in his "Republic" lays down the proper rules of the business. But we have never had his Republic, nor are likely to. The difficulty is that men are not dogs or horses. The qualities we wish to preserve and transmit are distributed over such distractingly wide areas. The giant is often mentally a fool. The genius has the frailest of physical frames. The moral hero may be neither physically strong nor mentally clever. How are we to mix these? And the greatest and best men are never sure about their next generation. Think of Germanicus producing that mad fool Caligula, of Marcus Aurelius being father to a Commodus! There are times when each successive generation seems

a plunge downwards, when the early vigour of a race has apparently exhausted itself, and a son is only a pale reflection of the father. Horace's terrible lines have pictured for us the Roman decay :

> Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
> Nos nequiores, mox daturos
> Progeniem vitiosiorem.

" Our parents' generation, worse than that of their ancestors, has produced us still worse than they, who in our turn will father a yet more vicious progeny." When this can be said of a people its case is bad indeed.

One may easily, however, make too much of the notion of decadence. The pessimistic judgment on the new generation is often enough the protest of timid oldsters, whom the world in its advance has outgrown. It is to them an outrage that these young people should be so different from themselves. This distrust and even terror of the new surely reached its height in that saying of Henry Rogers : " For my part I should not grieve if the whole race of mankind died in its fourth year ! " Nice result this of theological speculation ! Happily, distrust of God's growing world does not commonly go so far. Oftener we get in the old a shocked astonishment, not unmingled, however, with a sneaking admiration at the audacities of the newcomers. A delicious illustration of it is in that scene where old Arouet, Voltaire's father, listening to his son's *Œdipe* in Paris, when one bold touch after another brought down the house, was heard muttering to himself, " The rascal ; the rascal ! " Ah, that rascal new generation ! The true attitude

towards it on the part of the old has been, perhaps, best put by Jowett, of Balliol, who knew this subject if anyone did : " I incline to believe that the greatest power that older persons have over the young is sympathy with them, especially as they grow up towards manhood. If we do not allow enough for the strange varieties of character, and often for their extreme, almost unintelligible unlikeness to ourselves, we lose influence over them, and they become alienated from fancying they are not understood."

The vigorous nations believe in their new generation. It is refreshing here to read Emerson in his addresses to young Americans. You feel as you read that America is in itself the world's young generation. It is full of youth's vitality, ready for the vastest experiments with life. There is something intoxicating in the optimism with which Emerson exhorts his young countrymen to shake themselves free of all the old-world encumbrances of thought and custom, to begin absolutely afresh, free men in a free universe ! And this faith in the young is well founded. We cannot have too much of it. *Maxima reverentia puero debetur.* Here is the force divine. Talk of roaring Niagaras ! The young face you meet there in the street may curb Niagaras. It is only the old, who have gone through it and can study it from the outside, who can properly appreciate the miracle of youth. It is the age which Nature delights to honour, to which she shows her choicest favours. Youth has unlimited credit at her bank. The growing lad finds, indeed, his balance constantly augmenting. The more he spends, the more he has. Daily fresh capital is poured

in. There is the consciousness of new, mysterious strengths. What a godlike experience this, to find one morning a new power risen in you! And this, in adolescence, occurs again and again. From ten to twenty-one may be said to have a succession of births, each one to a higher range of being. The wonder here lies not in the youthful prodigies—in a Mozart playing before kings at seven; an Olympia Morata translating Homer at fourteen; a Grotius in great legal practice at seventeen, and Attorney-General at twenty-four; in Pitt, Prime Minister at the same age. It lies not in the exceptional but in the general; in this dowry, to every son and daughter of the race, of new, glorious sources of inner power, that widen and deepen with each successive year.

And of these powers the greatest that we know is that, where circumstances are favourable, of shaking off the whole crushing burden of heredity. The gloomy necessitarian philosophy that has infested Europe so long—that declares, with Helvetius and Schopenhauer, an evil nature to be unchangeable, just as poisons are unchangeable—is being disproved before our eyes. There is concealed in youth a redemptive quality that, where it has a chance, can wipe off the bad debts of a hundred generations, and start with a clean slate. In England to-day we have over 50,000 children in institutions of various kinds, rescued all from terrible environments, who will, a vast proportion of them, grow into good citizens. The facts are driving out the old despair of humanity, whether it be theologic or anti-theologic. We are discovering in man something deeper than

original sin. That is deep enough, heaven knows. The social reformer, of whatever colour his thinking, will join with John Morley when he speaks of " that horrid burden and impediment on the soul which the churches call sin, and which, by whatever name we call it, is a very real catastrophe in the moral nature of man." But with full knowledge and sense of all that, have we not also a scientific certainty that human nature is everywhere recoverable, that its general movement is forward and upward ; that it is a promise, a becoming, whose history, chequered though it be, can only fill us with boundless hope ?

But—and this is what we want mainly to say—we of the older generation have no business to hope, unless in our dealing with the new one we bring some other qualities than hope into play. Here it is with us —this new race, looking up freshly into our faces, asking its question of us, waiting for us to make or mar it. What is our preparation for the business ? We have brought to the pitch of the latest science our apparatus for working up the common raw materials—our wool, cotton, iron—into finished products. Have we any similar machinery for working up *this* raw material ? Of the new generation the most formative critical years are the seven from thirteen to twenty. Those are the manufacturing years, in which souls get their set, shape and quality. What are we doing in England for that all-decisive period ? We have a most elaborate and costly machinery for handling boyhood and girlhood. We take care that from five to thirteen every juvenile shall be looked after.

Is it the sublime inconsequence of our national temperament, or what is it, that permits us, with all our exaggerated anxiety about the earlier years, to drop absolutely all responsibilty, all arrangement, all thought apparently, for those following ones, when the battle really begins, and is decided? We are almost alone among nations for the completeness of our neglect in this matter. The military systems of the Continent, with all the burdens they bring, have this at least to say, that they keep their eye steadily on the new generation, and give it some sort of drill and training. In England, with our apprenticeship system gone, with home ties relaxed, with the vast proportion of the population lost in the huge masses of the towns, with our youth left to itself there, assailed by indecent literatures, exposed to every temptation, we have assuredly just now the greatest conspiracy of circumstances against the manufacture of manhood that perhaps the world has seen. We have aimed at liberty and have reached anarchy. Is it not a burlesque on our social order that the only organisation which can be called complete, which reaches all classes of our young men, is the organisation of sport? The club is the social nexus, the national training ground. It is there, and there only, that our rising proletariat learns its language, acquires its notions of discipline, attains its ideals and maxims of conduct.

That this chaos will continue it is impossible to believe. The hope for the future lies in the fact that the best minds in the country are already awake to the danger of the yawning gap in our social system, and are busy with attempts at filling it. What clearly

has to be done is to link the churches and all the moral agencies of the country into a national unity of organisation and effort which will cover the new generation with its care. We are just waking up to the value of town-planning. And we shall by-and-by be awake to something bigger still—to planning and building the manhood that is to dwell in the towns. The one material can be manipulated as certainly as the other, provided only we put soul and brain into the business.

The churches have a supreme responsibility here. They, after all, are, or are supposed to be, the soul-planners. Is it not time they stopped their present waste of energy, and concentrated on the real problems of the hour? Taking them as they are, their forces, properly organised, could ensure the effective supervision of every part of our population. Before this can be done, however, a vast process must go on in the Church itself. It will itself have to become "a new generation," with a new enthusiasm, a new organisation, a new sense of its mission in the social reconstruction. The world will be reborn when the Church has received its own new birth.

XXVI

SUCCESS

A DEPRESSING feature in the correspondence of some of us is the letters from people who despair of themselves. There seem such numbers of men who live in what Disraeli called "the hell of failure." Their world is all awry. Health has gone wrong, or circumstance. They have tried and have not achieved. Others have been fortunate, but not they. They have had no gleam of success. Is there a God in Heaven, or has He forgotten them, that life has proved such a mockery? These are hard questions, and what has one to say?

Perhaps on this, as on many other problems, there is not much that is new to be said. "Our new thoughts have thrilled old bosoms," as Meredith somewhere has it. But there are aspects of the matter which many of us, and the disconsolate most of all, have not perhaps sufficiently regarded. One would, of course, offer different counsels here to different ages. There is one way of looking at success for youth, where everything is at risk, and another for that further period when our life-deed, for good or ill, has mainly been done. But in a proper consideration of the subject these differences do not come first. We get

wrong about success from our habit of shutting it up so much to our individual fortunes. All of us have our multiple disappointments, and the way out of most of them is the simple one of broadening our outlook.

To start with, is it not for everyone of us, whatever be our age, station, or present achievement, a huge success that we are here at all? To be a man, of this *genus homo*, is not that something? For we are the aristocrats of this planet. Humanity stands for topmost in the hugest and longest fight we know of. Through countless æons our unknown ancestors, human and sub-human, waged the battle which has put us where we are. Through a process whose history beggars our wonder-stories we came by eye and ear, by cunning hand, by pondering brain. To wake up of a morning possessed of these things; to belong to a race which can think as we think and feel as we feel; to stand amongst the myriad other living creatures as rulers; to be denizens of the universe whose endless treasures are every day opening to our quest—this is the portion of you and me. And are we, in view of it, to call ourselves failures? Humanity, despite its falls, its sins, its sorrows, is the biggest success we know of, and his is a poor soul that does not thrill at the thought of it.

We are hard to satisfy. It is the very multitude and range of our possibilities that form one of our chief grounds of complaint. If we were shut up to one or two we might, perhaps, be less querulous. That there are a million kinds of good fortune leaves us grumbling that we cannot secure them all. But

note some of the things we all have. Do we think sufficiently, for instance, of what it is to belong to a successful nation, to an illustrious time, to a great cause that is prospering? Have we counted what it is to us forty millions of English that each day we wake to our part in a great unconquered Empire, to which all the nations look with respect and hope? We should understand if it were taken from us. And then, the time to which we have been born! That is a true note which Ulrich von Hütten strikes of the Renaissance age to which he belonged: "A new age!" he exclaims; "study is flourishing, minds are awaking, it is a joy to live!" But our time is richer than his by nigh four centuries of accumulation. To breathe its mental air is at every moment an intake of uncounted wealth. Do we count this mere sentiment? Do we refuse to reckon these things as a success for ourselves? Then we deserve to lose them. We should discover then what we had lost.

To live, we say, to keep on being alive, to add one day to another, is in itself a success. Old age is, in this way, an achievement. The man of seventy is a conqueror. One likes to contemplate him. Through all the storms and tempests, all the hidden rocks of the course, he has steered his bark and come so far. He has carried his sense of existence, his appetite, his thinking faculty, his whole mental and moral apparatus through all this stretch of days. Is not that something? What dawns and sunsets has he seen; what hours known of spring's subtle intoxication, of summer's noontide splendour, of autumn's beauty, of winter's bracing sternness! Think of the wealth of

experience, the store of sensations, the accumulated memories he carries! Can any book, or library of books, furnish such a poem, such a drama, such a history, such a theology, as are here contained? We repeat, it is a success to be alive, if only you know how to estimate the fact at its true value. On the whole, we doubt whether there is any success greater than this; than to have reached the point of appreciating to its full the joy of sheer existence; the joy of wholesome living. Is there a bigger triumph than that which old Traherne recounts, the humble West Country clergyman who, with his £10 a year, his suit of leather and his fare of bread and water, can say: "Through His blessing I live a free and kingly life, as if the world were turned again into Eden, or much more, as it is at this day!"

We dub ourselves failures too easily and too soon. The pessimistic verdict on our fortunes is so often the mere rebound of our selfishness. Were we better Christians we should sit easier to life. For then we should see the success of our brother man, which now girds and irritates us, as part of our own. That he can think better, that he knows more, that he acts with greater vigour and with wider results than we, why, so much the better. God be thanked that there are better brains than ours; that in this other man's faculty, superior to our own, there is so much the more added to the sum of human values. For let us remember there is no mental or moral wealth in the world which we are not sharing. The wise man makes us all wiser. What a churlish thing, when we have received so much, to grumble because our neighbour has also

found his portion! We have no great sympathy with that growl of the poet Nash: "How many base men, that wanted those parts I had, enjoyed content at will and had wealth to command! I called to mind a cobbler that was worth five hundred pound, a hostler that had built a goodly inn, a carman in a leather pilche that had whipt a thousand pound out of his horse's tail; a scrivener is better paid than a scholar." 'Tis an old complaint, which resounds from Lucian to Rousseau. But what would you? While the scholar and the poet have the high satisfaction of their scholarship and poetry, is not our cobbler to have something? By all means let our prophet have his board and lodging, but he were well advised not to grumble at the other man.

Success is an affair of ideals, of what we consider to be success. Aristotle defines happiness as having for its constituent parts "nobility, many and excellent friends, wealth, a goodly and numerous family and a happy old age; also such physical excellencies as health, beauty, strength, stature and athletic power; and finally fame, honour, good fortune and virtue." A large order truly, and we pity the man who starts out with the notion of filling it. But the *menu* which the old Greek here draws up shows us at least how rich is the feast that life's table offers. Success in the modern conception follows largely on the Aristotelian lines; it is largely a materialistic one. The bitter sarcasm of Diderot, in his "*Neveu de Rameau*," might be applied to many of the ideals of our time: "They say good character is better than golden girdle; yet the man who has a good character has not a golden

girdle, and I see nowadays that the golden girdle hardly stands in much need of character."

But in the race we back character against golden girdle. It will be found in the long run that it is only by character, by the quality, poise and training of the soul, that we can secure any success worth calling by the name, or guard against its perils when it comes. It is character which gives us insight as to the thing we are sent here to do, and girds us for the business of doing it. It is for want of character that so many of our modern youth permit small successes to hinder great ones. They allow some pettifogging skill at cards, at billiards, at cricket to keep off the mind from the real thing. Sport! There is no sport comparable to the grapple with the great realities. The point is to find out what we can do best and to concentrate all our powers on that. We win by putting soul into our work, and, as we have just said, when success comes, it is soul only that will preserve us against its risks. For it is when we mount that the real battle begins. There is no tougher problem than that of combining a spiritual ascent with a temporal one. It is easier for a man to be defeated by his popularity than by all his foes. What a picture is that which Carlyle draws of the weak victim of applause! "The liveliest picture of hell on earth that I can form to myself is that of a poor bladder of a creature blown up by popular wind; and bound to keep himself blown, under pain of torment very severe, and with torment all the while, and the cracking to pieces of all good that was in him."

From whatever side we view it, what is evident

is that the only true success must ever be an inner one. We like that saying concerning Joubert, that "he occupied himself much more with perfection than with glory." His countryman Taine also is on the right track when at twenty-one he says of himself: "My only desire is to improve myself, in order to be worth a little more every day and able to look within myself without displeasure." It is by keeping such a spiritual ideal before us as the New Testament offers that we escape missing the way. Then, whatever outward prosperities come to us, we shall see always where the real values lie. The wider our experience of the world, the closer our contact with all the varieties of human fortune, the surer will be our sense of what is, and what is not, worth our care. We find out what we can and what we cannot afford. We can do without glitter, without magnificence; without ninety-nine per cent. of what our mad world to-day seems hunting after. What we cannot do without are the love of our brother and the impulse to serve him; that freshness of soul which greets every new day with a sense of its wonder and mystery; that aspiration towards all that is higher and yet unachieved; that peace and power which come from the knowledge that God is with us and in us.

It is along this line that we gain the prize so many fail to win, of a successful old age. For our life then meets exactly the new conditions of the growing years. Just in proportion as the bodily powers cease to supply the lower satisfactions, does our soul cease to require them. Our ideals are rising. We want ever less of the inferior and more of the higher. We taste the riches

of quiet. We are with Theodoret: "They know not how great my love of quiet is. It is the sweetest of all this life's delectable things." We come closer to that character which Pater, in his "Marius the Epicurean," so finely sketches of Cornelius Fronto: "The wise old man . . . would seem to have carefully and consciously replaced each natural trait of youth, as it departed from him, by an equivalent grace of culture." Such men carry in them the signs of immortality. Fresh to the last, they prove that the soul never grows old.

In fine, we succeed in life in the degree to which, by spiritual discipline, we gain and keep control of our mental weather. There is no power we have, or can have, comparable to this. Outside, the rain comes down at its own sweet will. But we can command our inner sky. We can will the clouds away. You may be a failure with ten thousand a year; you may be a great poet, a commander of armies, a counsellor of kings, and be profoundly miserable. But reach the point where the soul quietly rests in God, the point where your daily preoccupation is to trust, love and serve, and you have won.

XXVII

SUNSHINE

When, after the long winter, our first day of spring sunshine comes, life to everybody seems fifty per cent. better worth living. The earth, the trees, our neighbours' faces, have all gone up in value. As we walk we find ourselves repeating Carlyle: "Blessed sun! It is sent to all living; and the whole wealth of the Bank of England is not equal to a beam of it!" It seems real gold that is being showered upon us, for we all feel richer. Where are the gloomy forebodings of yesterday? Vanished with its clouds. Everybody is of one opinion — that it is good to be alive.

We do not wonder that men have worshipped the sun. He seems so truly "the lord and giver of life." The old mythologies, both of East and West, all go back to that. Indra in India, Zeus in Greece, Odin in the North, Amen Ra in Egypt, are really names for the sun. Their story is that of his rising and setting and of his course through the heavens. And we can enter into all that; into the Parsees' fire-worship, and the cult of those old Peruvians with their splendid sun temple, with its golden figure of the luminary placed so that the first rays falling on it at dawn were reflected with dazzling splendour.

Sunshine

One wonders almost that the cult has not been set up in this country. It requires a climate like ours, where the clouds are so plentiful, where we pass days without a solitary gleam, to appreciate the sun. There is a fixed belief on the Continent that we never see him. There is Montesquieu with his cruel passage of the " Esprit des Lois " : " The merits of the English constitution are derived from the demerits of the English climate ; and their freedom comes from that distaste for all things, even for life, which springs from an inclement sky." 'Tis a good jest, but we know better. We enjoy our sunshine so much because we do not get too much of it. There are parts of this planet where there is more than enough. There was perfect sincerity in Jack's exclamation to his brother salt when, after a long voyage in the Tropics, they found themselves in a drizzling rain in the Mersey : " Ah ! we know now where we are ! Thank God, we shan't see anything of that something sun for a good while ! " Our hymnist who sang, " No midnight shade, no clouded sun, but sacred high eternal noon," as his ideal of a perfect, heavenly condition, proclaimed himself a Northerner. The dwellers in the furnace heats of Arabia, on the scorched wastes of the Soudan, have a different idea of the " unclouded sun," of " eternal noon." Yet it was one of our own poets who gave, perhaps, the vividest idea of intolerable heat that is to be found in literature :

> All in a hot and copper sky,
> The bloody sun at noon,
> Right up above the mast head stood,
> No bigger than the moon.

You stifle in the heat as you read. But then, Coleridge was a magician.

Most of us, in these latitudes, have not suffered too much in this way. Our well-to-do people have now become amateurs of sunshine. They travel far afield in search of it. And it must be said there are few more delicious sensations, when the dark days come, November fogs and chills, than to start after the sun, to overtake him in the Mediterranean ; to find oneself, perhaps, in the Ægean, or at Constantinople, basking in the glorious light, inhaling a breath odorous with Southern scents, a breath which intoxicates and inspires. Switzerland, too, has a wondrous winter sunshine. Away up in the Engadine, or at Davos, you may lie in bed and watch the sun come up over the mountain-tops ; and get up presently to a quality of air that has to be tasted to be understood. But it is the mountaineer who knows sunlight at its rarest. You climb hour after hour after your guide, who mounts with that steady, unvarying pace of his, swinging his lantern. By-and-by he bids you turn to the east, and you see there the beginning of a magical play of colour. It is the whole gamut of it ; everything in the solar spectrum—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet ; at each moment a new combination ; a transformation scene which takes away your breath. And then suddenly, smiting the rock above you, there comes a level beam of yellow gold. The sun is up ; the day is here. And you say to yourself you had never imagined that day could be so beautiful.

Then there is not only the glorious sensation, but the

glorious mystery of sunshine. This gorgeous orb of ours, which swings daily from side to side in our sky, which is carrying us with it at prodigious speed to some unknown bourn of the universe, gives us enough to think about. It raises more questions than it answers. What is behind those luminous envelopes which an eclipse reveals; the metallic cloud of the photosphere, the reversing layer, the rosy-tinted chromosphere? How does this heating apparatus of ours retain its heat? Is it by the shrinkage, the compression of its particles; or, as Gustave le Bon suggests, by the disintegration of the atom which he regards as, in the future, our one great source of energy?

And there are deeper sun questions, touching more nearly the mystery of our life. What a world of theology in its anomalies, its contradictions! It has in itself no life like ours. What organism, such as we know, could stand that temperature? Think of three million degrees of Fahrenheit! And yet, lifeless itself, it is the giver of life to us. This hell of fire it is which makes our heaven. Out of that awful burning maelstrom come our green meadows, our ripening corn, our placid streams, our blue skies. This inconceivable horror becomes, by mere distance, our chief temporal good. It opens a strange line of thinking, in which we may easily lose ourselves, but which cannot be left out of our cosmic philosophy. A chapter on the relativity of things might well start here. And what theology is in the thought that here, at the heart of our planetary system, is an eternal crucifixion, a death that we may live! We cannot stir anywhere; we cannot

even take in our sunshine without perceiving that our outer world is a parable of the inner world, the world of spiritual realities.

To come back, however, to our own planet and to ourselves. A book might easily be written on the effect of sunshine on temperament. Buckle, in his "History of Civilisation," has indeed made some contributions. Character, he declares, is everywhere an affair of environment, of people's allowance of sunshine amongst other things. But he made here, as elsewhere, some glaring mistakes. Human nature is deeper than these cheap statistics. It has been a common assumption that the clouds and fogs of the North have been responsible for the gloom in the northern temperament and the northern thinking. But is the northern temperament gloomy? We will back it for cheerfulness against any land of the sun. There is more laughter in Shakespeare than in all the southern literatures. Your Greek drama is black tragedy. Omar Khayyám wrote in brilliant sunshine, but his note, with all its exquisiteness, is an unrelieved pessimism. Tertullian, and after him Augustine, did their thinking under an African sun, and wrote the darkest passages in Christian literature. No; we shall not explain the human soul by remarking on the weather.

Generations have laughed over Swift's Laputans for their endeavour to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. Yet, when we come to think of it, these philosophers were in the right. It is, if we will properly consider it, one of our chief businesses to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. There is, mark you,

sunshine in cucumbers. They would never have been cucumbers without it. Our entire world is made up of sunshine, concealed often, buried often a thousand feet deep, hidden away in the heart of things. And it is, we say, our business to extract it. We are, in this age, doing a considerable amount of that. As we sit by the fire on a cold night ; as we steam across country at sixty miles an hour ; as we pump energy into our mills to spin there our woollens and cottons ; as we flash messages across continents and oceans—we are doing all and receiving all by extracts of sunshine. In those measureless geologic ages, when earth was a steaming swamp, your comforts and mine, by the fireside and in the railway train, were being provided for. Our planet's coal-cellar was being filled ; the myriad chemic and electric energies by which we now live were being laid in. Can we, as we muse on all this, escape the thought that here was a conscious provision and a Fatherly Provider ! Is this adaptation of our world to our faculty and need an empty chance ? Can we bear the idea that anything less than Love is behind all this ? For ourselves we say with Michelet : " Let the sentiment of the loving cause disappear, and it is over with me. If I have no longer the happiness of feeling this world to be loved, of feeling myself to be loved, I can no longer live. Hide me in the tomb. The spectacle of progress has for me no more interest. To the thirty sciences created yesterday add thirty more, a thousand ; I want none of them. What shall I do if you have extinguished love ? "

Which leads us to say that, important as is the

sunshine in things, vastly more so is the sunshine in ourselves, in the soul. We get the solar beam out of our coal and wood by mechanical processes. But lying over these is the moral process by which the spirit extracts from things another sunshine, a light and warmth that come from a sun behind the sun. Personal happiness and, we may say, usefulness, are just the art of extracting this sunshine. It is a secret of faith ; a certainty, inwardly grounded, that the sunshine is there ; in the most unlikely things ; that circumstances as black as coal will yield it, just as the coal yields sunshine when handled the right way.

This, surely, is what Carlyle means when he asks : " Is not serene or complete religion the highest aspect of human nature ? " The religion here is one which makes us at home in our universe as essentially a good universe, ready to bless us as far as we will let it. An inner indomitable cheerfulness is the soul's response to the Divine goodness. In a gracious nature it burns there with a steady flame, like the household fire on a winter's night. Our first duty to our fellows is to kindle this fire for them, to show them a shining face. Is there a worse sin against them than a dour despondency ? Immeasurably higher than our cleverness, our deftness here and there, as a service to our fellows, is that we carry amongst them a spirit of good cheer. Away with what is contrary to that ; with your bilious theologies, your pessimistic philosophies. Men with no good message to the world should be silenced. Their hypochondriasms, whether in religion or elsewhere,

are poisons whose sale should be stopped. Till I have found a word with sunshine in it I have no right to speak.

Through immeasurable ages the sun has been making our world; storing its crust with mineral treasures, filling its atmosphere with mystic forces; drying it, warming it, making it habitable for the humanity that was to live there. And man, finding himself here, discerns that all he looks upon, that all the physical forces which play round him, are symbols of something higher still; that behind the visible sun is another; that behind the physical universe is a spiritual universe also, warmed and lighted, alive with glorious forces; that here, too, is endless progress—a progress in which he participates. The sun in this heaven is the living God, from Whose eternal Being are being poured forth upon us treasures of revealing and of life that through the ages past have been making man into what he is, and that through the ages to come will be building him into something greater than he knows.

XXVIII

CONCERNING MARRIAGE

Is there anything new to be said to-day concerning marriage? Perhaps not much. Yet the social observer perceives certain agitations, certain currents of life and opinion which forebode changes in some at least of the earlier conceptions of it. As an institution it is not likely to be seriously shaken, for it rests on the strongest of all foundations—on fundamental instincts of human nature. That cheery Christian Father, Clement of Alexandria, puts its case in refreshingly plain language. In the "Stromata," after premising that marriage was regarded by the pagan philosophers, Democritus and Epicurus, as "the principal source of our sorrows," he proceeds: "In the Christian religion marriage is a moral institution. The natural form of our body commands it, and the Creator has told us to increase and multiply. . . . Marriage is the germ of the family, the corner-stone of the social edifice, and we ought all as Christians to give the example of it by contracting sacred unions."

Yes, men and women were made for each other, and there is no sign of their being able to get on without one another. There is a world of suggestion in the naïve remark of Mlle. Scudéry: "There is a something, I know not how to express it, which causes

a gentleman to please and divert a company of ladies more than can the most amiable woman in the world." Has it ever occurred to us what would happen if Nature, in a fit of absence of mind, produced during one generation only boys or only girls? But matters in our world are not ordered in that slipshod fashion. Ours, when all is said, is not a world of chance. And so, with a wondrous regularity, the balance is kept up, and man and woman in each generation face each other as, for better or worse, life-companions and yoke-fellows.

Yet in this sphere, where so much is fundamental and changeless, there are signs of change. Some of the ideas concerning marriage which seem as old as the world are dropping away, becoming plainly impossible to our time. In particular let us note that the earlier conception carried on its front, as almost its leading characteristic, the principle of the subjection of women. There is a noteworthy passage in Hooker on this point. The delivering up of the woman by her father or another in the ceremony is defended by him on the ground that "it putteth women in mind of a duty whereunto the very imbecility of their nature and sex doth bind them—namely, to be always directed, guided and ordered by others." He is here undoubtedly expressing the mind of the time, a circumstance which we are not to forget when we are enjoying the irony of the fact that Hooker himself, according to common report, married a shrew, who used to order him from his learned studies to rock the cradle!

Hooker, we say, was expressing the mind of his time. Yes, and of most of the time before him.

Has it occurred to us to notice how entirely Eastern a production is the Decalogue in the position it gives to woman? In the tenth commandment a man's wife is put in the same category with his ox and his ass, as things which his neighbour must not covet. She is a part of his belongings. It is a widespread view. In India we have only lately abolished the funeral pyre, while the position of widows is still deplorable. The Mohammedan doctrine is one of servitude. China offers woman three obediences. When young, she obeys her parents; when married, her husband; when a widow, her son. Aristotle, speaking for Greece, said a man should rule his slaves as a despot, his children as a king, and his wife as a magistrate in a free state. It appears to have been the other way about sometimes, if we may trust the stories of Xantippe, and that passage in Euripides' "Electra": "Shameful this when in the house the woman sovereign rules, and not the man."

The position in this respect was not improved by the asceticism and anchoritism of the early Church. For a time religion, in its intenser forms, was against marriage. Celibacy was preached as the highest life. Woman was regarded as the great temptation from whom the spiritual man was above all things to guard himself. This spirit pervaded Catholicism and shows there still. Wedlock was forbidden to the clergy, and, while permitted to the laity, was and is regarded as a concession to our lower nature. This sentiment emerges even in Protestantism in the position assigned to the wives of our Anglican hierarchy. We remember what Elizabeth had to say of the consorts of her

bishops. And to-day we have the curious anomaly of the Archbishop of Canterbury being "His Grace," following the princes of the blood in the order of social precedence, while his wife is plain "Mrs. So-and-so." The taint which early ecclesiasticism placed on marriage and woman emerges everywhere in literature. We see it in the low place which Rabelais, following here the monkish tradition, assigns to the sex; in the unworthy sneers of Erasmus; in the expressions which so sane and fine-natured a writer as the author of the "Religio Medici" permits himself: "The whole world was made for man, but the twelfth part of man for woman . . . woman, the rib and crooked piece of man."

With this attitude the modern world, in the West at least, has definitely broken. Woman has reached a new position, and the change has carried marriage along with it. America exhibits the farthest swing of the pendulum, where a recent English traveller quotes an American as saying, "The women do what they like, and the men do what they are bid." The new spirit shows itself in forms which are not always reassuring. There are wild plunges here and there. We read that very few of our women graduates marry. Are they, one asks, of the mind of Marie Bashkirtseff in that outburst of hers: "To marry and have children! Any washerwoman can do that!" In France the *union libre* is almost an established institution. France, indeed, in these matters shows an astonishing licence. It runs in the blood. Sainte-Beuve is positively scandalised that the writer of Mme. de Krüdner's biography speaks of an early

liaison of hers as "humiliating." Such a description of such an affair, he declares, is "not French." He is quite French in saying so. He is quite in the spirit of Montaigne, who writes with such entire coolness of the separate *rôles* of the wife and of the mistress.

It is not, however, we hope and believe, along such lines that the future evolution of marriage will proceed. Some of the best minds in France, indeed, perceive that this is the wrong road. The two wounds, says M. Hyacinthe, from which his country is suffering are "marriage without love, and love without marriage." Whatever happens, chastity, for both men and women, must remain one of the supreme and regal, one of the indispensable virtues. The laws of the soul declare it; there can be no growth worth the name without it. Carlyle gives us the final word on that point: "Chastity, in the true form of it, is probably the most beautiful of virtues—essential to all noble creatures. A lewd being has fatally lost the aroma of his existence, and become *caput mortuum* in regard to the higher functions of intelligence and morality."

A feature of the new situation which is all to the good is that woman is becoming less abjectly dependent on marriage as her means of livelihood, and as her end in life. The "old maid" of tradition was looked down upon because she had no vocation and no dignified position. The bachelor woman of to-day, educated, accomplished, brainy, taking her place in the higher work of the world, is a person whom no one dares to pity, far less to despise. She knows "how

to be happy though unmarried." She is no longer the being whom Clough in "The Bothie" deplores in hexameters:

> But they will marry, have husbands and children,
> And guests and households.
> Are there, then, so many trades for a man,
> For women one only?

Marriage itself, as we view it to-day, offers a host of questions. There is the Eugenic side of it, about which philosophers have dreamed and drawn up systems from Plato downwards, and on which doubtless a good deal more has yet to be said—and done. Then there is the subject of temperaments and of mental affinities. Is there a law here of opposites or of similarities? It is hard to say. You find people united by a seeming likeness in mental habit and pursuit, quite happy in their union. In the two Brownings, General and Mrs. Booth, M. and Mme. Curie, to take modern instances, you have minds of equal stature joyfully yoked in the same pursuits and enthusiasms. Others have found felicity in a totally different combination. They have sought their opposite rather than their similar. Robert Hall married his housekeeper, a plain, homely woman with no intellectual pretension, and was entirely content with his *ménage*. Like some other intellectuals, he appears to have looked for a mental rest in his wife. It is indeed remarkable, and, one may add, reassuring to note how many different sorts of wedlock appear to turn out well. The French arrange the marriages of their young people over their heads, and both sides seem content with the system. A recent Arctic

traveller tells us that among the Eskimo the wives get an occasional beating from their husbands, and appear to enjoy themselves not one whit the less! Our poor world, amid the queerest modes of living, gets on better than we are apt to suppose.

And yet one can see some improvements to work for. What, for instance, are we to think of the modern selfish bachelordom, which, greedy of luxuries, exploits women for its selfish indulgence, while abstaining from marriage as entailing retrenchment and economy! What craven spirits are these! Yes, marriage is, or should be, a school of economy and thrift and self-denial. It is an exchange. Here you obtain love, society, highest joy of heart and senses, and for these you give up some luxuries of the unmarried days. Is not that a good exchange—of lower things for higher? The whole question of manhood, to say nothing of Christianhood, is involved here—as to whether we take the sexual relation as one of mere animal indulgence, of degradation, or as a means of moral advance.

There is still much to learn here and to reform, on the male side especially. To far too great an extent "the woman pays." Along some lines it seems inevitable. Think of the young wife of the London suburb. Her husband from morning to night is away in the City, with associates, a thousand interests to engage him. During the long day the woman is alone, waiting and solitary. It is to be hoped her mate brings his best cheer with him when he does come! Amongst the poorer classes too much work falls to the woman's lot. My lord her husband, member

of a trade union, has his hours strictly regulated. There is no trade union for his wife. All that is from a bad tradition which it is time we eradicated. Why should not the Board school boy be taught some domestic economies ; taught that on occasion he may carry a skilled hand to the household work—to the ironing, say, of his own linen, to the cooking of his own dinner ? Who has ordained that one side of the house should do everything and the other nothing ? That one side should slave for ever in the home, while the other drinks away the family income at the tavern? Here is work indeed for our schools and our teachers —work, so far as seems, utterly neglected in the present.

Let us on the whole subject recall in conclusion that wonderful word of R. L. Stevenson. It is a teaching for men : " I, he will think, who have hitherto made so poor a business of my own life, am now about to embrace the responsibility of another's. Henceforth there shall be two to suffer for my faults. . . . Marriage is the last act of committal. After that there is no way left, not even suicide, but to be a good man."

XXIX

HAVING AND WANTING

MAN begins as a want, a hunger. A little child is one sustained appeal. It can do nothing but ask. Beggary is the most ancient of institutions. We all began so. And as we began we continue. Our wants are the making of us. It is hunger that drives the world. When we talk of Society's accumulated wealth we exaggerate. As a matter of fact, we live from hand to mouth. The richest of us is only a few months ahead of famine. The failure of a single harvest would reduce all of us to extremities. Nature does not believe in too large reserves. She runs us on a system of short rations. We thrive best, so she appears to think, on a limited margin.

The human hunger is surely the most wonderful thing on this planet. An elephant, many times man's size and strength, has an easily measurable want-faculty. The stream to drink at, the forest trees to browse on, and he has enough. But this hairless biped, weak as a child in comparison, what shall satisfy *his* hunger? There are parts of him which are inexpensive enough. Warmth is cheap; sleep is gratis; the food he really needs is a limited and easily compassed quantity. But his eye! 'Tis an inch in diameter, but worlds will scarce meet its appetite. Splendours of apparel and of furniture,

the lustre of jewels, the amplitude and magnificence of palaces are called upon to satisfy it. And there are other faculties, interior ones, more exigeant still. Who shall measure the mind's hunger—the demands of ambition, the lust of power, the thirst for happiness, for ecstasy! The growth of possession only enlarges the desire. Napoleon, starting from rustic Corsica, devours Europe, and is unappeased. The inner hunger drives him till it destroys him.

Want in man is no merely negative quantity. It is, as we have said, the greatest thing in him, his driving power. And the training and discipline of his wants is plainly a chief condition of his well-being. The psychology of having and wanting is a profoundly interesting study. Examine yourself and you will find the two conditions related in the most curious way. For instance, the satisfaction of having is by no means equal to the disquiet of wanting. To have a fortune in no degree touches in intensity the sensation of wanting one. The one feeling is half-asleep; the other is wide-awake. What is even more noteworthy is that when a given desire is satisfied; when that particular hunger has eaten its fill, the man himself is at his farthest remove from content. Men are nearest to disgust with life when at the point of repletion.

As to what this points to, we may inquire later. There is, however, in a study of this kind, a consideration which insistently demands attention, and which we must notice before going further. Society is organised on a basis of wants, but at present it is very badly organised. In particular it has, as yet, taken no

proper account of man's elemental needs. These, we have said, are in themselves not great, but they are of all others the most imperious—where a lack of supply inflicts the maximum of suffering. And yet at what a distance are we from the stage where our brother-man can be assured of his supply! England in this matter is still barbarous. It was only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in the Poor Law of 1601, that she recognised at all the duty of society to save its poorer members from actual destitution. The recognition from then till now has been a meagre one. Under it the pauper is an outcast, a kind of semi-criminal. Still it is true what Carlyle said in "Latter-Day Pamphlets": "Where there is a pauper there is a sin; to make one pauper there go many sins." We have some curious methods of relief. The Englishman, as he looks at the Dardanelles at Constantinople, muses on the countless corpses that have been flung into its swift-flowing waters, victims of horrid tyrannies, and flatters himself on his higher civilisation. Yet his London has also a swift-flowing stream! His Thames—how often is it the final refuge to which poor wretches under the existing system resort for the solution of their hopeless problem!

This cannot go on. The social conscience is in full revolt against it. It must not be that England shall for ever remain, as Lord Morley puts it, "a paradise for the well-to-do, a purgatory for the able, and a hell for the poor." It cannot be that for ever we are to have a social condition which gives half the entire wealth of the land to one-seventieth of its population, while the rest of the nation is so poorly

dowered that 939 out of every 1,000 die without property worth speaking of. The legislation, the whole political movement of the immediate future, will have to concern itself with the readjustment, in this department at least, of the national having and wanting.

One might suppose, looking at this aspect of things, at the vast and hopeless suffering of our disinherited multitudes, that for large portions of the race, at least, wants were the curses of life, the enemies most to be dreaded. That such an impression is made upon us shows how far we are as a society from wholesome conditions. For wants, we must again affirm, are our makers, the weavers of our manhood, the motor force of civilisation. The first thing necessary to progress is to make a man want more. On a savage island, where the inhabitants go naked and live in caves, the first step upward will be the creation of a new need. When civilisation approaches them ; when they see other races possessing a thousand things they have not—comforts, powers, knowledges—the hunger for all this which seizes them marks their day-dawn as a people. The keenness of their appetite is the measure of their capacity. When Japan realised Western civilisation, the new want thus created pushed the nation forward in one generation beyond all the progress of thousands of past years.

And this law is universal. In the highest civilisations, as amongst the lowest, it is in the creation of new wants that we discern the line of progress. But the question here is, " What wants ? " It is in the moral gradation of them that the whole secret lies.

We learn the stature of a soul by the quality of its wants. At a given height certain hungers have almost ceased. By his station placed at the top of the world Marcus Aurelius writes thus of himself: "From my tutor I learned endurance of labour and to want little." It is a refinement upon this which he records of his father, Antoninus Pius, who enjoyed or refrained with equal equanimity: "The luxuries which tend to refine life and of which fortune is so lavish, he enjoyed at once modestly and unfeignedly; if there, he partook unaffectedly; if absent, he did not feel the loss."

But a man may be in command of his baser hungers and yet have a low range of wants. The most abject beggars are often in the ranks of the wealthy and the highly placed. A man whose centre is pride or self-conceit may be said to live on the mental alms which his fellows dole him. He is miserable unless they feed him day by day with the spoon-meat of flattery. The territorial lord, the local magnate who looks this way and that for obeisance, who lives on the honeyed word, is the least independent of all his company. His soul is a mendicant with the hat perpetually stretched for alms.

Our wants change as we grow. At a certain level it is realised that mere having is, of itself, a poor business. The real satisfactions are in doing and in being. To wake up morning by morning to the sense of possession is an affair that may become flat to wearisomeness. Going over Lord Scarsdale's splendid mansion at Kedleston, Boswell said to Johnson, "One would think the proprietor of all this must be happy." "Nay, sir," said Johnson, "all this excludes but one

evil, poverty." It is in activity, the putting forth of energy, that we find ourselves best. Thus it is that the highest natures have set little store by external possession. We know at what level primitive Christianity rated them. St. Francis takes poverty for his bride. Wesley leaves some items of furniture and a few silver spoons as his earthly possessions. The early Fathers, speaking we suppose from experience, found riches to be associated usually with bad character. Chrysostom declares the rich to be " veritable robbers posted on the highway, where they strip travellers of all they possess." Jerome says, " Opulence is always the product of robbery which, if not committed by the present proprietors, certainly was by their predecessors." Basil compares the rich to men at a theatre who, having taken all the best places, seek to prevent anybody else from entering.

Expressions of this kind, and the characters that lie behind them, look extreme to the modern mind. But the world has had need of its extremists to keep things even. The exaggeration, the wild inflation of the hunger for riches required to be met by lives that showed what great things could be done without them ; that showed the narrow limitations of material satisfactions ; that showed the true line of the human advance. The lesson here is not that man is, like St. Francis, to eat off the bare ground, or like Liguori, to choose a miserable, unwindowed hole for his habitation. It is enough to know that you can do these things and be inwardly serene ; that you can do them and be spiritually powerful beyond kings and emperors. There the lesson ends. It does not teach

that we are all of us to go barefoot, while immeasurable riches lie underneath, waiting to be dug out and used. The world's resources cry to be developed; they, too, have their hunger. And that they will be used to their last limit and possibility is plainly Nature's intent concerning them. Ours is an enormously rich world; and man is in charge of this garden of treasure to dress it and to keep it.

But the human having and wanting, in the innermost psychology of it, leaves us in no doubt as to one thing. The treasures that man accumulates are not, and can never be, the food of his soul. It is the moment of possession that teaches us that. Do we think it was for nothing that things have been so contrived as to leave man at the hour of his repletion with his keenest sense of disgust; that when man has everything he is apt to feel at his emptiest? All the meaning of life is there. It is at such moments man touches his destiny. In a flash there is revealed, to sane minds at least, that, possessing this world, we are above it; that our citizenship is in a Kingdom beyond it. We have, in order to want; to want on in ever-deepening dissatisfaction till we find where the void is to be filled. Let one who, across the centuries, speaks to our heart from his own, tell the story: "When a man cometh to that estate that he seeketh not his comfort from any creature, then first doth God begin to be altogether sweet to him. Then shall he be satisfied with whatsoever doth befall him in this world. Then shall he neither rejoice in great matters, nor be sorrowful in small; but entirely and confidently he committeth himself to God, who is unto him all in all."

XXX

A DOCTRINE OF ODOURS

Flowers have been man's playmates from the beginning. They were here, indeed, long before him, yet it is only yesterday that he began seriously to ask about their secret. The world in which they and he find themselves becomes indeed more wonderful every day. Our modern investigations do not simplify life. They render it at every turn more complex, more baffling; the things that seemed most familiar, most homely, as science turns its ray upon them, assume a new aspect; beneath the plain surface yawn abysses of mystery.

And amongst these old-time acquaintances that have suddenly become enigmatic we have now, we say, to number our loved companions the flowers. They are suggesting to us the most astonishing questions; as, for instance, are they thinkers? have they a morality? is there not amongst them even a sense of humour? We see them full of marvellous contrivances. They lay traps for catching their prey; they have cunningest methods for self-defence, for the carrying of their seeds, for securing fertilisation and the preservation of their offspring. Is not that forethought in the juniper and mountain ash that covers their seed with a sweet husk which birds greedily devour, afterwards ejecting the seed, stripped now of its case and ready to sprout? Before Archimedes, plants such as the

lucerne had invented the Archimedean screw. And think of the diabolical ingenuity of that orchid which, having attracted the bee by its sugary perfumes, plunges it into a bucket of water of its own make, and then compels the luckless victim to crawl for escape through a tunnel, also of the orchid's contrivance, which is laden with the pollen that the bee, as it gets away, carries with it on its back to impregnate by a further similar process the companion flower! The bee doubtless thinks himself a clever fellow; but here he is openly treated as a bumpkin, soused, laughed at, and then sent to do his tormentor's business!

The extraordinary thing is that the intelligence which we seem to be watching in all this appears to be at once so awake and yet so limited. It is as though it were everywhere feeling its way; fighting as ours does against a vast unknown whose ways it seeks to understand; making experiments which turn out at times to be failures, and learning by them; inventing, as we do, rude contrivances at first, to be followed later by something more refined and finished. Have we here, then, a wisdom which, in enmeshing itself in these delicate frames, has suffered a Kenosis, a self-emptying and limitation? We shall soon, if present appearances count, have a "new theology" with the flower kingdom as starting-point.

But all this is introduction—far too long—to what we have really to say. After all, the most wonderful thing about the flowers is their perfume, and it is this which we want here to discuss. Flowers appeal to two of our senses: to the eye with the grace of their outline and the splendour of their colour; and

to our sense of smell with the mystery of their fragrance. We call the scent of the rose beautiful, but it is a new, strange beauty, not commensurable in any way with that which appeals to the eye. Studying it, one is lost in speculation about ourselves and our world. This one faculty of smell, the most restricted and limited of our perceptions, weds itself to this mysterious quality of the flower and finds there a new delight. May there not be a thousand other qualities belonging to it, now all unknown to us, equally delightful, had we only an apparatus for perceiving them? But to keep to this one. The flower's perfume is its forthgiving; it is, as it were, the outflow of its essence and being; its influence, as that of a man when he speaks or writes, and so projects himself upon the world.

This disengagement and giving forth of itself on the part of the flower is perpetual. The rose does not for a moment cease to fill the air with its invisible particles. It gives them off with a tireless prodigality, and yet with no apparent diminution of substance. How it does it forms one of those problems of the disintegration of matter on which science is now so keenly engaged. How minute the particles must be may be gathered from the experiments of Berthelot, who calculated that it would take a hundred thousand years to bring about the loss by its scent of one milligram of musk.

And the prodigality of the flowers in the gift of their perfume is not the only thing. It seems also to be, as one may say, without *arrière pensée*, without hope of material return. There are parts of the flower's economy which are organised on a purely commercial basis,

which expect their *quid pro quo*. Their pollen and nectar, for instance, are for the attraction of insects, and to secure their assistance in the work of fertilisation. But the pollen and nectar have no perceptible odour. On the other hand, the most deliciously perfumed flowers, such as the rose and the carnation, are neglected by the insects, which besiege in crowds the flowers of the maple or hazel tree that have scarcely any scent.

The flower's perfume, then, so far as we can discern, is a pure gift. It is free of commerce and of vulgar utilities. It belongs to the region of cosmic grace. It gives and asks nothing. It is in fact a declaration, from the bosom of the earth, in favour of pure joy as an element in life ; that we are here, for one thing, to taste that. The cosmic arrangements provide for it, and ask us to take note of the fact. So long as flowers give us their perfume we can never believe in a churlish God.

But there are odours and odours. There is a character, one might almost say a morality, in perfumes. The old-world teachers paid a good deal of attention to this point. It was early discerned that a subtle association exists between certain scents and the passions ; as though in the flower world there existed the eternal war between good and evil ; as though here the soul found allies alike for its nobler and its baser instincts. Clement of Alexandria, in the "Pædagogus," has a curious chapter on this theme. He develops a whole science of perfumes ; of their uses for healing, stimulation, etc. He speaks of certain scents which make men effeminate, and the compounders and vendors of which he would banish from the State. There are odours, he says, full of evil suggestion, and

used by men and women as incitements to licence. "And as dogs with fine sense of smell track the wild beasts by the scent, so also the temperate scent the licentious by their perfumes and unguents." On the other hand, he holds, "there are sweet scents which neither make the head heavy, nor provoke lust, and are not redolent of embraces and licentious companionship, but along with moderation are salutary, nourishing the brain and strengthening the body."

The old Alexandrian has undoubtedly ground for his doctrine of the morals of odours. Like the mercenary troops of the Middle Ages, who enlisted indifferently on either of the opposing sides, we find the subtle suggestiveness of the perfume used here in the service of religion and there as an incitement to vice. The bagnio and the church are alike perfumed. The use of incense in worship comes from the earliest times. We read of it in Jewish, in Persian, in Egyptian antiquities. Christianity was not slow in borrowing it from its neighbours. Ambrose of Milan speaks of the use of incense as an established practice in his time. For ourselves we do not think the Church well inspired in introducing this feature into its service, and still less in continuing it in our Western world to-day. These laden vapour-clouds have a stupefying rather than a clarifying effect on the worshipper. Let the building smell of God's fresh air, and the breath of flowers, if any are to be had. We are disposed to say of a church what Plautus says of woman: "*Tum bene olet, ubi nihil olet.*" To inhale the stuffiness of some of our modern ritualistic edifices is to remind us of Sir Walter Besant's question, "whether we think

we are pleasing God by making a stink in a church ? " Or of that reply of Bishop Creighton to one of his clergy who, in his argument for incense, reminded his diocesan that " he had a cure of souls." " And do you think," was the reply, " that souls, like herrings, cannot be cured without smoke ? "

We get the religion of odours better outside the Church than in it. And our flower garden is a great teacher, if we will let it speak. Have we properly considered, for instance, the lesson of character which here unfolds itself ? Nowhere else do we get so impressive an illustration of the truth that *operari sequitur esse*, " doing follows, is according to, being." The quality of your action will be according to the quality of your nature. Your rose in emitting its scent is exerting its influence, performing its deed in the world. And the deed is always coherent with the nature it comes from. If you want to improve this deed of the rose you must improve the doer. For a new perfume you must have a new culture. And thus from one's garden one can pronounce with some certainty on the schemes now afloat for social reconstruction. The people who believe in a millennium by proclaiming a republic, or by announcing Socialism to-morrow as the law of the land, are reckoning without mother Nature, disdaining her plainest lessons. Paradise was all right. It was its inhabitants that went wrong. And it is no good talking of regaining Paradise till we have a better breed wherewith to stock it.

Away down in the Riviera, in the elect land between Cannes and Nice, a gorgeous procession of flowers moves across the sun-kissed country through all the

months of the year. It is one of the loveliest sights in the world. But this shining army is a doomed one. Beautiful, radiant, it has been called forth to die. At Grasse, in the centre of the flower country, stands a great machinery of destruction, where the flowers are pressed, tortured, killed. They die, but not entirely. In passing they yield up their essence, the precious perfumes which by-and-by, at high values, will be placed upon the markets of the world.

Non omnis moriar, said the Roman poet. He would not wholly die. The essence of his life, his work, his thought, compressed into his verse would still live amongst men. We can to-day go further than that. Dying, with the flowers, we see is to be etherealised, to have their life concentrated, lifted to a higher power. The whole cosmic process is there epitomised. Through seeming destruction we are carried to loftier grades of being. Tons of raw rock matter are pulverised to secure your gramme or two of radium. The world is everywhere busy extracting its essences ; passing up from the simple to the complex, from the rude material to the refined spiritual. That we may well believe is the process now going on within ourselves, of which death will be a leading factor. "Let us say to ourselves," says Maeterlinck, that "among all the possibilities which the universe still hides from us, one of the easiest to realise, one of the most probable, . . . is certainly the possibility of enjoying an existence much more spacious, lofty, perfect, durable and secure than that which is offered to us by our actual conciousness." It is the language to-day both of science and religion.

XXXI

LIFE AND ARITHMETIC

To some of us when we were at school life would have seemed distinctly better without arithmetic. Colenso was not beloved of us. And we have done with a minimum of the study since. It is indeed surprising with what a small quantity of this kind of thinking the world has tried to get along. Arithmetic as we now know it is, for the Western world at least, a comparatively modern affair. It is only within the last thousand years or so that our numerals and notation reached us from India. Myriads of people have lived and died on this earth without being able to count beyond ten. And so far as we know, they nevertheless managed to enjoy themselves.

But however it has been in the past, modern life has become more and more an affair of computation. England has lately been living on numbers. It has been convulsed by the question of eight or four. But apart from Dreadnoughts and the Navy, we are obsessed by statistics. Pythagoras, could he have seen our time, would have found in it additional argument for his theory that number was the essential principle of all things. One might, indeed, in these days set up quite respectably as a Pythagorean. Is not number, as the sage contended, the basis of harmony? And if we do not follow him into all the mystic significances

of the one and the many, of the odd and the even, of the seven and the ten, we at least realise that there are no problems of life into which number does not enter.

There is, indeed, something almost weird in the extent to which arithmetic—often enough not our own, but somebody else's—works into our life. The heart, they tell us, beats at the rate of about a hundred thousand pulsations a day, or some thirty-six and-a-half millions a year. There will be just so many throbs of it in you and me ; not one more or less. We shall go up our office stairs just so many times. One could compute how often we shall go to bed at night and dress ourselves in the morning. The whole business down to its minutest details can be put into figures. Is there anyone, we are inclined to ask, who does the reckoning for us ; any cosmic ledgers into which these entries go ?

There is one department where arithmetic rides rough shod over us, and that is the matter of income and expenditure. Mr. Micawber's declaration that income one pound a week and expenditure nineteen and elevenpence spells happiness, while your one pound income and twenty shillings and a penny outgo means ruin and misery, is an economic law that none of us can evade. Archdeacon Paley insisted that his women folk paid cash down in their shopping. It acted, he said, as a curb on their imagination. That was very like Paley. In religion, as in shopping, he was a calculator. But while a wise man will keep a steady eye on his cash-book, he will not allow it to dominate him. The modern world is under a nightmare of figures. It estimates its happiness, its im-

portance, its value that way. "He is worth so much" —and the amount is mentioned. Might we not, for a change, figure on our millionaire in another fashion? He has, we perceive, like the rest of us, only one nose and one pair of eyes. He can eat only one dinner at a time. He can see no more suns than we can in our sky, and can breathe in a given time no more mouthfuls of the spring air. Who knows if we have not as many thoughts per minute in our brains as he? And when we come to the quality of them, we have escaped from arithmetic altogether.

We do escape sometimes, but it becomes increasingly difficult. Note how in the sphere of morality the ground has been staked out and edged round by arithmetic. We are dominated by the figures on a clock face. The man who started the division of time was, likely enough, anything but a moralist, but he introduced the biggest of moral revolutions. He woke man out of his primitive laziness and bade him count the hours. To-day we eat, sleep, work, and play under the spell of our monitor. Our artisan may forget the decalogue, but the strokes of the mill clock yonder are potent for him as Sinai thunders. Our very worship is timed. It begins on this figure and ends on that. The preacher must obey this master. He may be forgiven for being too high or too low, too broad or too narrow; he will not be forgiven for being too long.

Our morals are, in fact, inextricably mixed with figures. They are full of addition and subtraction. We reckon our national temperance in terms of our drink bill. We tabulate our infant mortality; we collect statistics of illegitimacy; we put down the

fluctuations of church attendance. We estimate our social condition by weekly budgets of the working classes. We are pricked in our social conscience by tables showing the enormous inequalities in the distribution of wealth. The fact that one-seventieth of our population own more than one-half of the entire wealth of England strikes on us as with a note of doom. If we get a social revolution, it will be arithmetic of this sort that will bring it about. It is the figures, indeed, that damn our modern civilisation. Could any eloquence equal the effect, as revealing the conditions of the poorer life of New York City, than the bare statement made some time ago by the *Times'* correspondent that "two-thirds of the inhabitants live in tenement houses, that have over 350,000 living rooms into which, because they are windowless, no ray of sunshine ever enters"? In history a single figure is often a lightning flash that illumines an epoch. What a picture have we of life and labour under Marcus Aurelius, from that ordinance of his that there should be no more than 135 festival days in the year! And on occasion there is nothing more subtly ironical than a figure. That is not a bad example which Aristotle, in the "Rhetoric," gives us of Moerocles, who "said he was as virtuous as a certain respectable citizen whom he named, who got 33 per cent. by his roguery, while he himself got only 10 per cent."

Arithmetic has played its own peculiar part in theology and religion. In the East, from the earliest times, mysticism wrapped itself in numbers. It found marvellous significances in the one, the three, the seven. Judaism took much of this from further

East. The seven great angels came from Babylon. In the books of Daniel and of Revelation, upon which modern criticism has thrown such a revealing light, the figures read like solemn music. The writer of Daniel, with his weeks of years, and his " time, times, and half a time," has hidden in his mysterious numbers the whole tragic history of the tyranny under Antiochus Epiphanes. The Apocalypse, with its number of the beast, hints darkly to his readers of the persecution under Nero. Our modern prophets, who turn these ancient figurings into present-day portents; who paint from them fanciful and terrifying pictures of coming calamities, serve at least one useful purpose. They offer us living examples of the vanity of using arithmetical calculation as a basis of spiritual religion. We are not saved by dates, especially when they are wrong ones.

Yet figures have their religious interest and their religious importance. That was a great event when the Roman abbot, Dionysius Exiguus, in the sixth century, began in his Easter tables to count " Ab incarnatione Domini," and so started the Christian calendar, making the world do its dating henceforth from " A.D." The figures of Christ's recorded ministry set us thinking. The Synoptists, we find, deal with a period of fifteen months. Out of the 450 days here, only thirty-five have any record. Thus twelve-thirteenths of that briefest of public careers are absolutely without history, and yet they have made almost all subsequent history. All over the religious field the figures will have their way with us, often a very disquieting one. Thoughtful Catholics, one would

think, must pause over the fact that at the Vatican Council on Infallibility the first vote showed eighty-eight non-placets, and these numbering some of the finest intellects of their Church. And what conclusion have they to draw from the fact that France, with a population of some 40,000,000, and with 40,000 Catholic churches, has, according to recent computation, not more than 2,000,000 of practising Catholics! And the Protestant, what has he to make of the not less awkward fact that in this same France there are, according to Bodley, only 700 Protestant places of worship?

Arithmetic at times becomes intensely personal. In the way of sarcasm it would be hard to find a keener thrust than the arithmetical one which Balzac, in the "Peau de Chagrin," deals against transubstantiation: "Catholicism puts a million Gods into a sack of flour." And in personal religious history has there been anything harder than the fate of Hosius, the Spanish saint of the fourth century, who, after his hundredth year, signed under pressure the heretical creed of Sermium, and so fatally lost caste with orthodoxy? Says Tillemont: "He would have been honoured as one of the greatest saints if he had lived only a hundred years." The years indeed played him a scurvy trick. We are never safe, it seems, even when we are a hundred.

Yet arithmetic, as we have hinted, while it means so much, does not mean everything. It belongs, after all, to the rind and crust of things, not to the central heart. We have talked of income in terms of figures. But what, when we open our eyes of a

morning, is the *real* income—the thing that really *comes in* to us? This breath of the spring we inhale; this vision of the country; this scent of flowers, this light on our loved one's faces; their morning greeting, the thoughts we get from the open book, or that break in on us as from some invisible source? What account book is ruled in a way to set all that down?

The great achievements ignore our cipherings. The scientific inspiration which flashes on some elect mind, the idea which is immeasurably to augment human power, passes contemptuously over our law of so much output for so much labour. One minute of this is worth a thousand years of humdrum measured by the clock. The ministry of Jesus, we have said, was of the briefest. As a piece of work measured by ordinary calculations it was insignificant. Yet there was material energy enough in it, if we spoke of that only, to build all the churches in Christendom. Put that into foot-tons! And when you come to its impact on souls, your foot-ton measure, hard pressed before, fails entirely. The soul-states are outside this sphere of things. Who can calculate in this way the great decisions? One "yes" or "no," single words, smallest in the language, may be weightier than a hundred volumes. Love, hate, ecstasy, despair, a soul's trust and holy resignation: how is your arithmetic to state these?

Our study has been a discursive one, but its outcome is inspiring. It is something to live in a world whose bare figures reveal such wonders. It is more to know a world whose mysteries and sublimities are far beyond their range.

XXXII

THE WAY OUT

Those of us who have travelled much, especially off the beaten track, have more than once found ourselves in seemingly impossible situations. They have come so often, indeed, that we have constructed a philosophy of them ; a philosophy based on the conviction that there will be a way out. The way may turn out a queer one, even humiliating or ludicrous ; but we shall find it and get there somehow. It is perhaps a stiff bit on the Alps, or a midnight adventure in the Far East, or may be some desperate business situation at home. As we think over these past experiences, we have a sense of the wondrous elasticity of life ; of its resources, its knack of eluding dangers ; of the unimagined possibilities in it that appear at the last moment to save us. It has been like our dreams. What scrapes we have dreamed of ! But we always get out of them. This aspect of our past ought surely not to stand for nothing with us. It may well go into the structure of our faith. There is a whole religion of " the way out."

Human life is largely an affair of predicaments—with solutions attached. Man is the most unsheltered of all the beings we know. The animal world, leagues below in position, knows nothing of the winds that

blow round him. He has a myriad sensibilities on which a myriad attacks may at any time be delivered. Yet there is nothing here to grumble at. Man was made for this battle. It is his training, his way upward. And he is so marvellously helped in it. It is with him as in the Homeric combats, where the fighters have unseen powers on their side, instilling a new vigour for the difficult moment, at times covering the hero with a cloud, or withdrawing him from the rush of the foe. Think, for instance, of the way out which Nature provides us at the end of each day. She withdraws us from the combat. After the wearying struggle which has almost beaten us with its blows and fatigues, we lay our heads on the pillow. For some blissful hours ahead, the world is to make no more demands on us. We sleep, and the whole trying business is blotted out. In the morning the sun is shining, and we are new men, eager for the fight. Sleep makes light of our troubles. Its nightly lesson is that in our waking hours we do not make too much of them.

Ours would be a happier world if we considered more attentively Nature's way with us. She has always her door of escape where we see only an impassable wall. She proves our alarms to be false ones. Malthus was sure that we should be ruined by over-population, and Mill even was taken in by the argument. We know now that the calculation was wrong. It was as if, because a child doubles its weight in the first twelve months, it would go on doubling its weight every year through life. When, in like manner, men seek to frighten us about the prospective failure of our coal supply, of our food

resources, we refuse to be terrified. We note the marvellous way in which, as the human need develops the outside energies respond. The universe perpetually invites man to want more in order that it may supply more. Have we tapped all Nature's reserves? We are only at the fringe of them. Just as we are beginning to talk of the exhaustion of our coalfields,science whispers to us of the stored-up energies of the atom, of there being enough in the copper of a centime piece, could we disintegrate it, to drive a luggage train four and a half times round the globe. So, too, when men declare that we are in a time of moral decadence, that civilisation is on the point of being swamped by materialism, that our ideals are to be lost in a tempest of wars and ferocities, we refuse to believe it. There is every day a new threat of war, but it remains a threat only, and war becomes meanwhile more and more difficult to make. Against the talk of ever more hideous methods of destruction, of battles in the air, of aeroplanes raining shells upon helpless suburbs, let us put the silent working in the consciousness of the peoples, the new brotherhood of the masses, the conviction of the monstrosity of war. Do we not see here, beneath all the present hostile clamour, a way out being silently prepared which will belie the slaughter-prophecies, and make history a cleaner thing than it has ever been before?

And as with matters material, so with matters mental. It is wonderful to note how Nature prepares her children for the changes she brings; how she prepares her old world to become a new one. She is here continually accomplishing what seems the im-

possible. She performs miracles of readjustment. Think of what went on in the pagan world at the introduction of Christianity. Have we sufficiently considered the feelings of the old religionists as they watched this new revolutionary system forcing its way? That great army of priests, of sincere adherents of the old faiths, as they watched the desertion of the temples, the swift decay creeping over every branch of their religious organism, what despairs must have seized them; what a sense of ruin, as if the end of all things had come! We see the story of it in the frantic diatribes which brought on the successive Christian persecutions; the arguments of heathen writers and orators, that the misfortunes of the Empire, the famines, the earthquakes, the lost battles, were all the result of permitting the existence of this new and impious cult of the Cross. Yet the transformation is effected. Men's minds adapt themselves to the new mental atmosphere. They find they get on perfectly well without Jove and Olympus. The fresh evolution goes on and the world prospers under it. At a time like our own, when such vast mental changes are in progress, it is pleasant to remember that the same laws of movement and of the mind's adaptation are in operation now as then. From all our theologic embarrassments, Nature will find her own way. Man will take in all that is to come, and find that it will build him, and not destroy him.

Let us, however, from these ways of Nature draw no false deductions. Her care of us is intended not as a soporific, but as a call. She is ready to help, but our emergencies are there, first of all, to test and exercise

our own quality. We declare ourselves so often at an *impasse* when, if we will only look round, we shall find any number of doors open to us. What multitudes of housekeepers are to-day overwhelmed with anxieties about making ends meet, when the solution is so simple. Let them equalise accounts by spending less, and do this by renouncing their pretensions to a false level. You want to be fashionable! Then go and live amongst the poor. You will there be at the height of fashion. Your last year's clothes amid these honest workers will be elegance itself. One wonders continually why anybody should strain after the company of the vulgar rich, with their impoverished souls and abominable manners, when one can enjoy the straightforward sincerities and loyal-heartedness of the poor. It would still be a capital exercise for young couples to go, as did Traddles and his young wife in "David Copperfield," to the West-end shops and enjoy the display in the windows of luxuries they were so entirely happy without!

On another side of the modern problem there are multitudes of miserable people who need, as the way out from their miseries, to have re-preached among them the Gospel of Work. Said Wesley to his followers: "Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed." It was good advice, if somewhat high pitched. There are all grades of work, but the humblest sort is a thousand times better than none at all. It were better to whittle a stick than to sit with folded hands. Charles Lamb, pensioned off from the East India Office, found idleness the worst of enemies. "Too

much work," he wrote to his friend, Bernard Barton, "is bad, but none at all is infinitely worse." One wonders that any sensible man should retire from business unless it be to take up business that is more congenial. What! With all our faculties ripe and ready, disciplined by years of training, to fling them out of gear, henceforth to rust and rot! A pianist is a pianist only by keeping up his practice, and a man is only a man so long as he keeps his whole manhood in practice.

The way out of ourselves is through ourselves. We are looking in a dozen directions for betterment except the right one. With what envy does many a worker, condemned, as he says, to a sordid daily round, with no outlook, no variety, regard the moneyed people, who race over the land in their motors, who are free to visit all the world's beauty spots! And assuredly there is a pleasure in travel which we would fain everybody could share. But let us make no mistake here. The commonplace man does not get rid of the commonplace by travelling about; he simply carries it with him, making exhibition of it over a wider area. The only way out from the sordid is to refine your own soul. The way into the world of wonders is to open your faculty of wonder. If you would see more, cultivate your sight. Read a handbook of botany and the next hedgerow will be a revelation to you. Are you looking for good society? You can have Homer and Shakespeare, Milton and Scott, at sixpence the volume. The community has enough to do yet, God knows, to dig a way out to light and air for its buried millions; but no indi-

vidual of us, wherever placed, will win out to the soul's upper airs except by his own pick and shovel.

There is nothing better for you than to find your own way out. For you have then not only the pleasure of the result, but that of the process. Sir Donald Currie working on from errand boy to millionaire, found delights on that strenuous road, which the millions, had they dropped into his lap, could never have given him. The man who begins at the summit is to be commiserated. He has none of the joy of the climber. Nature flings her difficulties in front to try what stuff we are made of. She invented her impossibles that we might clear them out of the road. The night before Jena an artillery column got stuck fast in a ravine. "Napoleon," we read, "assembling the weary gunners, provided them with tools fetched from the park in the rear. Himself holding a lantern, he urged on the work. Tired as they were, the men laboured under the eyes of the Emperor without a murmur, and at last the obstacle was removed, and the long column began to move slowly on." That is the way that conquerors in all fields win their battles.

There is a way out for all of us which many do not care to contemplate, but which, nevertheless, it is at times wholesome to think upon. From our ambitions, our achievements, our dignities, our cherished joys, lies one path forward we shall one day traverse alone. It is the weirdest of journeys this we mortals take, from one world into another. The strangeness of it is that none of the myriads who have trodden this way comes back to tell us about the new scenery or the new company—*nulla vestigia retrorsum.* There

is no such startling contrast as that between the uproar of this world and the silence of that beyond. Yet everything bids us be of good cheer about the journey. It is natural, and always what is natural is good. Socrates was convinced that his condemnation to death was a good thing for him. We, who are also condemned, may be sure of the same thing. The way out here is a way up. When the last moment comes we shall find ourselves endowed with the feeling appropriate to that moment. Said Dr. Donne, when his turn came : " I am, therefore, full of inexpressible joy, and shall die in peace." Men have gone out through the flames of the stake and found the road tolerable. When Dr. Taylor, the Marian martyr, was brought to the common where he was to suffer, his word was : " Thank God, I am even at home." Modern thinking has brought a great agnosticism as to the way in which life expresses itself beyond the tomb. But the Christian hope, in its essence, is unchanged and unweakened. We move towards that mysterious boundary line, joyfully convinced that what awaits us is the best for us. Love has ordered our way so far ; it will order our way out, and all that lies beyond.

XXXIII

THE INWARD INDUSTRIES

We divide our population roughly into the busy and the idle. Of idlers we have at bottom the tramp, the slouching casual, visible on every high road, the man who is always "seeking work," but never finding it; and at the top the unoccupied rich, inheritors of wealth they have not earned, and which they do not know how to use. In between lies the great mass of our workers. The Western civilisation is, as a whole, a hard-working one. England to-day shakes from end to end with the thunder of her machinery. We are most of us engaged on something or other. We are makers, or menders, or exchangers; fabricators of this and that—shoes, or pianos, or operas. And we call this our industry. The busy man is the one who fills his time with activities; who toils at his trade in work-hours, who pursues his hobby when off duty.

But there is another species of industry, even more important, at which our age is not nearly so proficient; where, indeed, it seems of late to have become increasingly neglectful; an industry which is falling into decay and disorganisation, with disastrous results to us all. You are not a true human worker by your outside activities, however strenuous they may be. Your eyes and fingers are not the only artificers. There are other workshops than the factory you toil in. There is a trade inside your trade—a trade you

must give your mind to, if your life is to be at all worth living.

Our talk shall be of these other industries. But as we go to reach them we are met on the way by a class of inner work which is not our subject, but which we can hardly help noting as we pass. There is famous work going on inside us, apart from our own will, even our own consciousness. It is amazing that any one of us can be idle, if only for shame at the toil that is keeping us going. The incorrigiblest loafer is a hive of patient toilers that are far too good for him—heart that ceaselessly pumps his blood, lungs that do his inhaling and exhaling, liver that secretes, some twenty thousand billion live cells, all busy building this lazybones's totality of organism. Is not this a tragedy, that billions of faithful workers culminate in a ne'er-do-well who refuses to work!

But that is a digression. Our business is with that inward which we know and feel, with our own proper mind and soul. This inward is deeper than our mere mental machinery. It is more than our logic mill, our arguing faculty, our memory, our apparatus for scheming and for calculating. The region we seek is the central one of all, the region where we feel our life, and make it; where we pass our verdicts on it; the region of believings and aspirings, of faiths and unfaiths, of our moral failures and successes; the region in which we expect to find, if anywhere, life's ultimate secret. For it is here that everything begins; it is to this that everything returns. It is this region, its state and condition, that gives the value to everything outside. It is our

real estate, the scene, if we are wise, of our truest industry. Here will go on weavings, gardenings, cultures ; loppings and prunings, diggings, weedings, waterings ; the greatest, the most incessant, incomparably the most fruitful of all our activities.

Yet it is here that in our Western world we witness to-day the strangest neglect, the completest disorganisation. It is as if we had organised everything but this. Never was there an age in which the outside life was more strictly planned. Our factories go by clockwork ; the Army and Navy are machines ; every science, every art, every pastime even, has its definite rules and methods of procedure. In the deeper realm, on the contrary, our age has been one of the dissolution of rules, of the breaking up of the old disciplines, without new ones to take their place. The West is to-day the scene of vastest external activities compared with an enormous emptiness at the centre. It is in this respect a contrast to the East. There have been always inward cultures there, deep, intense, which have produced remarkable results. Buddhism has its Eightfold Path, its Tri-Pitakas ; Brahmanism its Vedas and Vedanta, with a philosophic discipline which demands as a preliminary a complete subdual of the passions. India is full of metaphysics, of theology, of inner discipline. It regards the European, with his vehement energies, as a surface trifler ; his invasions and conquerings as inferior outside performances.

> The East bowed low before the blast
> In patient, deep disdain ;
> She let the legions thunder past,
> And plunged in thought again.

There has been here, doubtless, a disproportion, an undue neglect of the outside world; an excessive brooding which is not wholesome. But there are psychic results in the East which the West needs to take note of, and from which it has much to learn.

But the West has had its inward industries, though not of our time. The interest of mediævalism lies, not in its fightings and slaughterings, but in the story of its saints, in its literature of devotion. Those dim centuries—your thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth—are bound together in this way by threads of gold. Nothing is more moving, more humanly interesting, than the history of these heroic endeavours after God, after the highest life. We see men, here in isolation, there in groups and companies, setting themselves rules of living, believing it was possible by means of them to ascend from stage to stage of inner illumination, of spiritual peace and joy. The mystics of the West answer here the mystics of the East. You might compare the "Book of the Nine Rocks" of the fourteenth century, with its successive platforms of attainment, with the Eightfold Path of the Buddhists. They are both seeking the same end, and, one might say, by similar means. They all agree that high inner attainment can only be reached by a high discipline. They believe the soul must prosper by its industries. They rival each other even in the excesses and extravagances of their inner effort. The self-tortures of the Indian fakir may be set side by side with the penances of a Liguori, the macerations of a Henry Suso. Think of this last, this Henry Suso, wearing night and day an under-

garment with a hundred and fifty brass nails in it, their points turned in towards the flesh, and continuing this with other tortures for sixteen years, his poor body one continual wound! And this that he might win for himself a soul!

Inward industries of this kind, amongst Protestants at least, are impossible to our day. They are warnings and not examples. They are neither religion nor common sense. There is nothing of this in the New Testament. We abhor the conception that the Author and Guide of our life could take pleasure in seeing His handiwork thus mutilated. We believe in strengthening the body—not half killing it—as a means of strengthening the soul. We say with Browning:

> To man propose this test:
> Thy body at its best,
> How far can that project thy soul on its lone way?

The inward industries of our time, if we are to have any, must be on a scheme which fits with our knowledge, with our conception of the universe. But the problem for us is essentially the same as for our fathers. The political progress, the triumphs of science, the accumulations of wealth, the social development, offer in themselves no solution to the question—how to attain the highest, the triumphant life. That remains, for us as for them, always an affair of the inner industries. The enormous emptiness at the centre which characterises the life of to-day arises, we say, from our present neglect of them.

What these industries should consist in is a question

far too large for discussion here. It is, we perceive, one that involves all the moralities, all the spiritualities. What we can attempt is at most some suggestions. And the first is that we need to take this as our first and chief business in life. When we wake of a morning, we are to remember that not our hands only, not our senses or our intellect only, but our inmost soul, has this day its work cut out. We shall bring to outside business our accumulated skill and training. What shall we bring to this inner one? We shall, let us next remember, gain no success in it apart from a constant, hourly striving. We can only keep good by the incessant effort to be better. There is no standing still. You go on or you go down. Note, too—and it is a glorious fact to note—that, however meagre a moral and spiritual nature you start with, it can be indefinitely developed by an honest daily endeavour. You can, for instance, cultivate your heart, cultivate the love of your fellow-man. You can do it by a steady inward striving; by a determined extrusion of thoughts and feelings that are contrary to love. You can resolve not to speak ill or to think ill of your brother; to pay him as much respect when he is absent as when he is present. You can develop the habit of putting yourself mentally in his place, of realising his difficulties, his sorrows.

And it is amazing to find how this industry, honestly followed, develops in us; how it opens up branch industries which offer similar products. Controlling our thoughts in this direction enables us so much the more easily to control them in others. We realise with Seneca *Si tibi vis omnia subjicere, te subjice rationi*

("If you would subdue all things to you, subject yourself to reason"). Thus, the loving our fellows, the steady effort to do so, keeps the soul clear of all manner of unclean things. It is an effective antidote of our miserable vanity. How can we strut in our paltry egotisms when our brother yonder is crying for our aid? When we ask what possible good we can do him by our demand for his homage, our taste for flattery will be effectually dealt with. Love is an incorrigible democrat. It is the ally of plainness, simplicity, homeliness. The greatest show of it we have had in this world began in a stable and ended on a cross.

The industry of loving carries with it in a surprising way the industry of cheerfulness. The world's melancholy is largely a laziness. People are sad because they are too idle to toil inwardly. Do you suppose joy is going to drop into you simply because you open your mouth? Life is not constructed on those lines. Joy is the product of the disciplined, hard-working soul. It is an extract of the inner chemistry, a science which you must learn. Examine yourself when that heavy cloud of depression rests upon you, and ask whether it is as much an affair of outward circumstance as of defect and neglect in your inner machinery. It is the greatest gift of the gods, this command of our internal weather. You cannot disperse the cloud that floats a mile above you. But this fog inside you has no business there. It is movable, as you will perceive if you try. Ours is an age of depression, and the main reason of it lies in the sheer neglect of the soul's activities.

Industry of all sorts requires a motive power. The thousand wheels of the factory move first by that inward quality of them which lends itself to movement, and next by a power which is communicated to them from without. And the soul's machinery works in the same way. The great spirits of all ages are united on this. They find, with Augustine, that for them the two great entities are the soul and God. Here is the ground of nobleness—that we are related personally and immediately to the Noblest. When, in that interior kingdom of ours, we set about weeding and watering, the uprooting of unwholesome growths, the entire detail of a resolute culture, the development of it into an ordered and fruit-bearing realm ; when we choose the higher motive and reject the lower, when we struggle on to the higher and ever higher levels, we find ourselves in all this leaning more and more heavily on a Power—not ourselves—that strengthens and sustains. That this is the eternal order of things under which we live is shown by the fact that there has been no serious endeavour after highest life that, if it has not begun, has not at least ended here. *Nil sine Deo* is the note of all the great inner industries we have record of. The Puritan tradition, the Quaker tradition, the mystic tradition, the efforts of every age and clime after high character-building repeat this story. They all issue in one conclusion, that the inward industries are based on an intimacy with innermost Being ; that they are, in short, only another name for the daily " walk with God."

XXXIV

THE SHARING OF PLEASURES

THERE are joys which are incommunicable. Indeed, it may be asked whether any feeling can really be shared. Our delight, our sorrow, have always an outflow upon our fellows, but the outflow is a product and not the thing itself. What we call sharing is a reality, but not *this* reality. The self has a very high wall round it. The soul has its guests, but they cannot penetrate to its innermost chamber. The artist offers his creations to the world; what he cannot offer is his own feeling as he creates. The saint labours to communicate his gospel; what he does not communicate is his inner rapture, the secret of his communion. Renan says of St. Francis: "What belonged to himself alone was his way of feeling." But that is true of all elevated souls. Their inner consciousness is like the moon's farther face, which we never behold.

And if this be true of the uppermost of our nature, of the best in us, it is not less so in the feelings that we count as lower and unworthy. The lust of power is not amongst the shareables. When a man wants dominion over his fellows, he wants it for himself. When he indulges his spite, when he cherishes his revenge, he nurses it alone. For the base to communicate his

thought, his lustful inclination, would be to advertise his inner ugliness, and this he has no mind to. Selfishness is essentially secretive ; it dare not give itself a name.

And apart from moral considerations, questions of the higher or the lower soul, there are pleasures which, in the nature of things, keep their limits, and are not transferable. The male half of humanity cannot know precisely the feel of a mother's joy. Age in contact with youth is in a position singular and pathetic. In sight of that exuberance, that zest of life, it falls back upon imagination, upon recollection. It knows and yet does not know. It has its own joys, and ought to be content. But this particular rapture has gone from its veins. And, old or young, the riches of our separate temperaments are non-exchangeable. A Jefferies could write incomparably about a field and hedgerow, but his own sense of Nature, as he viewed a spring morning—could he offer *that* to his neighbour ?

Altogether, when we talk about the sharing of joys, we have, it seems, to limit ourselves all round. We have to deal with derivatives, not with essences. But even so we have a wide theme open to us. It contains what might almost be called a new morality and a new politics. The world is here entering on the perception of a fresh conduct of life ; one that has been before it long enough in theory ; but which, for the first time on a large scale, is attempting to realise itself in practice. We are beginning to see that joy is the inheritance of all ; and that no joy is legitimate which we do not, as far as is possible,

seek to share. This feeling, notwithstanding Christianity, notwithstanding all the world's religion, is, we say, a late acquisition. The world, up to a recent date, believed in unshared pleasures. The Greeks and Romans founded their citizen life on slavery. To get a joy for the few they organised misery for the many. Cato ruthlessly turns his slaves out to perish when too old to work for him. A Roman lady, to gratify a whim, orders a slave to be crucified. She finds a languid pleasure in watching his torture. The mediæval baron ate his dinner with additional zest from the thought of the prisoners starving below in his dungeons. And mediæval theology taught the rapture of the saints in beholding from heaven the anguish of the damned.

We have a recrudescence of all this in the Nietzsche philosophy, which draws an impassable line between the strong and the weak, teaching the strong to use their power for themselves, to get all and to keep all. The weak are to be used, exploited in the interests of strength. It is the doctrine of a new heaven and a new hell, where the upper realm is reached, not by righteousness, but by force ; where the sin which damns is the sin of being feeble. The teaching is a powerful appeal to a certain side of our nature. The doctrine of exclusion is dear to our pride. There is a baseness in us which exults in belonging to a " select " circle, in the thought of the multitudes who are not allowed to come where *we* are. And it will take a long process of hard hammering before that remnant of the old Adam is driven out of us.

Another enemy to the sharing of pleasures, a vastly

more respectable one, is the old theological idea of the merit of poverty, the merit of renunciation. Men have taken poverty for their bride. Under a religious impulse, they have stripped themselves of everything, have worked downward till they have reached the lowest level of living; have fed off the bare ground, and dispensed even with soap and water. The impulse itself was a great one, and it yielded its own peculiar joys. And in so far as this poverty was a search after inner wealth, it touched on a profound truth. But the splendid heroisms of asceticism must not blind us to its essential onesidedness. For the ultimate destiny of man is to wealth and not poverty. No theologian, however ascetic, has ever dreamed of a poor heaven. To help the needy simply by becoming ourselves needy is the policy of lying down in the gutter because your neighbour is there. It were so much better to lift him out of it. Life, truly viewed, is seen to be working ever towards a larger wealth, a wider joy. It is not by throwing away riches, but by increasing them, we contribute to the true evolution. Where the test comes in is in our willingness to share what we gain; in our purpose to gain for the sake of sharing. We are to develop our capacity and life fruition in order that our neighbour may profit by it. By making yourself poor you only add to the sum of poverty. By enriching your nature, you enrich the world.

And this applies all round, to the whole process of getting, winning, and possessing. Nature sets the example. She proceeds on a doctrine of free grace. She gives, and expects us to give. Our faculties

are here in us, unbought. We woke up to find them there, and the mere fact that they are unpurchased, unearned, makes it absurd, as well as impious, to call them our own. Indeed, Nature takes care that they shall not be our own. The painter, the thinker, the musician cannot live for themselves if they try. Turner, they say, was a mean man, but we all revel to-day in the wealth of his colours. Every line he drew was for you and me. Beethoven never heard of us, and we have never paid him a penny, but to-day all his music is our inheritance. We have come, without expense on our part, into the possession of his soul. Every rich nature enriches humanity to the full extent of its wealth. The world, in this deepest portion of it, is, we see, constructed on the principle of no private hoardings. The thinker cannot keep his thoughts to himself, the humourist his humour, the poet his poetry. Whenever a genius is born, he is yours and mine. The new invention, the new discovery in science, knocks at the doors in every mean street, and pushes its gift inside. Life is ordered on a generous basis.

These surely are very plain hints which Nature gives us as to that other kind of wealth which we call money, and the material goods of the world. They show us, for one thing, that to decry riches is futile, is, indeed, a kind of blasphemy against the order of things. For the world is a rich world, calling out in every corner of it for its riches to be discovered and used. If you want to abuse anybody abuse not the rich man for being rich, but rather the poor man for being poor. Palaces, parks, pictures, beautiful

things—are these to be condemned? Rather they are to be multiplied to the whole extent of the earth's resources. Its complaint against us is that they have not been multiplied enough. To gain them you have no call to rob the rich. Your business as part of the community is to keep on making everybody rich. We are here in an extraordinary confusion. In a time of slackness, of bad trade, we talk about supply and demand. "There is no trade because there is no demand. There has," we say, "been over-production." The warehouses are overstocked. Working men are unemployed because the manufacturer cannot get rid of his wares. But is there no demand? Amongst these thousands of poor is there no demand? Every man is full of demand. He is demanding bread to eat, boots and clothes for his children, furniture for his house. Give him these, and he will have a demand for higher things—for books, pictures, jewels, all that the soul covets for the ease and beauty of life. The question is clearly not one of demand. A world so rich and our poor so poor! It is a question of a true production and a true distribution. What this generation has to clearly grasp, as the next stage in the social evolution, is that, in the earth's natural resources, combined with man's cunning of brain and hand, there is wealth enough to secure for every man and woman of us, not only the bare necessaries of living, but all that makes for a great existence, all that is food for the body, for the mind, and the soul. The world's true inheritor is not the capitalist, the aristocrat and the landowner as such, but man, and that by right divine.

The Sharing of Pleasures

Sharing, as we see, goes through all departments of living. It touches the finer as well as the grosser aspects of life. It is only in this way that we reach our true development. We have to go out of ourselves to reach ourselves. In communicating what we have, we realise forms of being which would otherwise remain unknown to us. It is here, for instance, we see the spiritual value of the family. Southey, in one of his letters, says well of parenthood: "Till we become parents we know not the treasures of our own nature; and what we then discover may make us believe that there are yet latent affections and faculties which another state of existence may develop." And how fine is that word of Diderot: "A pleasure which is only for myself is brief, and touches me only lightly. It is for myself and my friends that I read, that I reflect, that I write, that I meditate, that I understand, and study and feel. I think continually of their happiness. A fine line strikes me; they shall have it. Have I met a noble sentiment? They shall share it. Have I under my eyes some fine spectacle? I meditate the description of it for their enjoyment." Let us contrast this with the words of another Frenchman. Amid the frightful sufferings of the Paris populace during the Terror, Danton, speaking at a banquet, is reported to have said: "Our day has come to enjoy life. Sumptuous hotels, delicate meats, exquisite wines, silk and gold, women to dream about—all is the fruit of conquering power. All this is ours because we are the stronger. After all, what is the Revolution? A battle, and what is the proper result, except as with all battles,

the taking of the spoils of the conqueror ? " Diderot was not a Christian any more than was Danton, but the one speaks here the life principle of Christianity, while the other utters its fatal, diabolic opposite.

This theme runs to the highest levels. Sharing is inwoven into the whole system of the cosmos. It belongs to man because it belongs to God. While the spectacle of the universe compels us to a belief in the Divine unity, it not less proclaims a Divine multiplicity. We cannot conceive a lonely God. Love, in the Deity, could not exist without an object of love. The idea of a Trinity, in almost all the world religions, has come, on the human side, from the necessity of thinking. We cannot conceive of highest enjoyment in the supreme Mind apart from an outgo, a reciprocity of thought and feeling, in which Highest had intercourse with an answering Highest—an intercourse in which all was understood, in which all met its full response.

We are here, then, upon a central, ultimate principle of things. Until we have recognised it and fully submitted ourselves to it, we are at cross-purposes with our neighbour and with the universe. Under its sway I destroy my enemy by refusing to regard him as enemy. How can I rejoice in his defeat and discomfiture ? I stand inside his mind and feel it all myself. Is he evil ? All the more should I share my good with him. Says Augustine : "*Plerumque cum tibi videris odisse inimicum fratrem odisti et nescis.*" (" Most often, when you think you are hating an enemy, you are hating your brother without knowing it.")

The sharing of joys, in the full doctrine and practice

of it, is the farthest-reaching and most inspiring of gospels. It takes in the whole compass of heaven and earth, and makes one merge in the other. That we must share our joy means a coming reign of universal peace and brotherhood. That God must share His joy means that in the end we shall partake His immortality, His love, the beatitude of His being. All this is in life's promise, in the ordering of things as it is being revealed to us. The world works steadily to the realisation of the splendid vision of the prophet-poet of the Apocalypse, who saw a new heaven and a new earth, from which sorrow and sighing had fled away.

XXXV

LIFE'S SECOND BESTS

We are living a second-best life in a second-best world. The proof of this lies in our power to conceive a better. If this were best, there were no doctrine of heaven, no counsels of perfection. The heart refuses Spinoza's doctrine that this is all that can be, and that of Leibnitz that we are in the best of all possible worlds. Against them we have the facts that we progress, and that we aspire. The old-world thinkings, the old-world religions were largely efforts to explain why we are in the sphere of second bests. Plato unites with Genesis in the supposition of a Fall. Existence, as we have it, was with the Greek philosopher a downcome from something higher. Gnosticism puts the earth-life at the bottom end of a long series of descents from highest and best.

However that may be—and we are not seeking here a solution of these ultimate questions—it is plain we are organised on a system of second bests. We are all at a level far below the top. You may think the prince, the aristocrat, the man of supreme genius, has life's best. Nothing of the kind. Three parts of them, as they know well, are inferior. The king may be mentally mediocre ; the aristocrat is at odds with his family ; your genius has chronic dyspepsia.

Life's Second Bests

The mass of us see a thousand different ways in which our affairs could be improved. You would like a park, and your garden is some ten yards square. You look in the glass, and the reflection is none too flattering. Your income—but that is a chronic discontent. Could you but rearrange things—your height, your social status, your husband's temper—how different your life would be!

So few of us can be in the first flight. And those who are there, as we have said, have to put up with all kinds of second bests. A poet, after some years of highest production, begins to realise his decline of power. Or if *he* does not, the critics do for him. John Morley says of Wordsworth that the ode "composed on an evening of extraordinary splendour and beauty" is "the one exception to the critical dictum that all his good work was done in the decade between 1798 and 1808." But Wordsworth lived more than thirty years after that. It is the fate of the highly-endowed to watch the departure of his gifts. The once world-renowned athlete leans on his stick as, unnoticed by the crowd, he watches the feats of his successors. Woman knows the feeling which attends the decline of her beauty. Madame Récamier, who reigned by her loveliness in youth, tells how the consciousness came to her that her reign was over. "From the day when I saw that the little Savoyards no longer turned round to look at me in the street, I understood that it was all over."

And even in the heyday of our powers it is only at intervals that we reach our best. Especially is this so with people of fragile health and nervous tempera-

ment. The day of illumination is followed by one of darkness or of hodden grey. George Eliot, after her morning's work at composition, spent hours of exhaustion on her couch in the afternoon. How many of us know the times when we cannot touch the tasks we love, when we can do nothing but trifle at this and that; lounge idly in our lowland realm while the heights shine above us, remote, inaccessible! Herbert Spencer, in his later period, could only work two hours a day. The rest was billiards, and things of that level.

Do what we will, and be what we will, we cannot escape our dose of second best. We may be as strong as Samson; we may have a brain that falters never in its task, and yet our fate here will pursue us. It will meet us in this simple fact, that to secure firstness in one thing, we must put up with secondness in a dozen others. Our classical scholar has swept off all the prizes, and is unrivalled in his knowledge of Greek choruses, and then, pat upon his triumph, comes Hazlitt with this cruel criticism of it all: "It [classical scholarship] has no skill in surgery, in agriculture, in building, in working in wood or iron; it cannot make any instrument of labour, or use it when made; it cannot handle the plough, or the spade, or the chisel, or the hammer; it knows nothing of hunting or hawking, fishing or shooting; of horses, or dogs, or cudgel-playing, or bowls, or cards, or tennis, or anything else." Perhaps your don does know something of these things, of one or two of them, but he is a child as compared, in their own skills, with the blacksmith, the jockey, the agricultural labourer.

One wonders, indeed, how anybody can be proud of his own bit of doing, when every man he meets in the street, every slouching artisan, every country yokel, can beat him in a dozen things.

The principle of second bests works on the largest scale, over the widest areas. Take, for instance, the great forward movements in religion. To secure what their promoters conceive to be the highest in one direction, they have to accept manifest inferiorities in others. Thus the Nonconformist bodies in England, in order to obtain liberty and spirituality of worship and Church order; to obtain, as Goethe says of the German dissidents, "a closer access to God than could be reached in the formularies of the State Church," have had, through successive generations, to put up with all sorts of second bests. In architecture they have had to content themselves with barns and whitewashed conventicles in place of noble cathedrals; in music, with harmoniums instead of great organs; in politics, with a back seat; in the social realm, with ostracism instead of recognition. No one can say that these things are bests, are things to choose for their own sake. The multitudes who have submitted to them have simply accepted the law of life we are here discussing, the law which compels you, in choosing your highest, to take it with the inferiorities tacked on. The high ideals, we perceive, are usually born in a stable. They have to make what terms they can with sordid surroundings.

And this brings us to the real gist of the matter, to the question of how we are to deal with our second

bests. The answer seems to involve a contradiction. We are to accept them, and not to accept them. There is a sense in which the world takes to them all too easily. It is a world of compromises. It is apt to be shy of the heights. It finds itself more comfortable somewhere lower down. Thus it happens that religious movements rarely keep to their first level. The historic Church has been mainly a Church of second bests. The distinction between clergy and laity, which has characterised nearly its whole course, is a descent from its first institution, in which the whole body of believers was counted as spiritual, as priests unto God. The union of Church with State, under the circumstances in which it took place, was the weirdest of amalgams. Constantine was a queer spiritual father. In England a Church with a Henry VIII., a Charles II., a George IV. as its head offers a strangely distant resemblance to the New Testament model. Religious revivals tell the same story. In our day Methodists no longer begin the morning with a five o'clock preaching. The modern Quaker would be scarcely recognisable by George Fox. In the spiritual, it seems, as in the physical world, action is sure of its reaction.

One would despair in view of all this, were it not for the balancing truth that reaction in its turn has its limits; that it can never kill the action; and that the total result of the two is in the forward direction. Man essentially is *épris des hauteurs*. There is in him an innate sense of, and thirst for, the perfect, which will never let him rest. It is the divine, immortal part of him. Aiming ever at what is beyond his

present accomplishment, it lands him in perpetual disappointments, yet always with some new addition to his inner equipment. It is the finest, hopefullest thing about him that his innermost nature refuses acquiescence in life's second bests. It is the enduring pledge of a " first best," somewhere and somewhen, in which he is to participate.

But that is by no means all that is to be said of our secondbestness. We refuse it, but we have also, if we are wise, to accept it. And it is precisely because we believe in the first best that we can put up so cheerfully with the second. Homeless prophets, having not where to lay their heads, invalids, with no physique to speak of, their life, as Pope put it of his own, one " long disease," have taken their lot with serenity; not because they did not believe in homes, not because they disregarded health and strength, but because they had something in them so much greater than these. They carried a jewel which made them independent of small change. We must have something high in us to adjust ourselves easily to the low that surrounds us. And it shows something fatally wrong, fatally wanting in society when it refuses this acquiescence. It is because faith, the best of human possessions, is failing from among us to-day that men on such small provocations proclaim their disgust of life—sometimes by violently leaving it. Quite recently two English men of letters, a poet and a dramatist, have committed suicide. One had declared previously that he would not be able to support life if he found his limitations. The other was conscious of declining strength, and said the prospect of in-

validism was to him unbearable. One hates to criticise the unhappy, but we refuse to accept these as sane verdicts upon life. Invalidism! Some of us during all our working years have scarcely known anything else. As to finding our limitations, have we not yet discovered that only one in a million of us is anything but mediocre? At this rate we are none of us fit to be alive, and we might acquiesce in the doctrine of the Cyrenaic Hegesias, who persuaded multitudes to suicide by his argument that life was so full of cares, and its pleasures so fleeting, that the happiest lot was death.

It is plain that the only philosophy of life that is worth anything, the only philosophy that gives us victory instead of these miserable defeats, is a philosophy that is rooted in religion, for, as we have said, it is religion that enables us to live on good terms with our second bests because we have a first best. Walter Pater, in his "Marius the Epicurean," speaks of "so exclusively living in the ideal or poetic elements —the elements of distinction in our everyday life— that the unadorned remainder of it, the mere drift and *débris* of it, becomes as though it were not."

That is the idealism of an Oxford don who had the minimum of contact with life's rough and tumble. It reminds us of Joubert, of whom it was said that "he had the air of a soul which had by chance encountered a body and was doing the best he could with it." For ourselves, we believe in a more intimate and genial relation with our second best. Why ignore it or contemn it? A healthy religion teaches a man to appreciate and enjoy it. There is abundant

good in it. Let him enjoy his bodily life, his eating and drinking, his sleeping and waking. Let him enjoy his garden though it be but ten yards square, his home though he is housed in a cottage at a weekly rent.

Let a man cultivate his second bests. The points where you are first-class are by no means the only ones to be attended to. Your *métier* is painting or preaching, but that is no reason why you should shut yourself up to them. A dozen other things in you cry out for culture. You may gain in them only humble successes, but these surely are better than nothing. If your garden does not win the first horticultural prizes, that is no reason for letting it run to weeds. It is our pride that hinders us here. The petty distinction we have won in our own particular line makes us ashamed of that lowly learner's position we must take if we are to cultivate our poorer parts. Yet every yard of the inner estate is worth the spade.

We shall have reached the final philosophy of this matter in the determination to make a first best out of our second best. There is a superlative in all of us, if only we will try to reach it. You are in a subordinate position, a servant ; then set yourself to be the best of servants. Your holding is a tiny one ; why not endeavour to make it the best of small holdings? Your bodily health is bad ; try with Pascal to make your ailments a means of grace. Your outside circumstances are a cross to your desires ; but can you not climb to a higher view-point concerning them ? Is not that a true word which Marcus Aurelius says on these matters ?—" Evil for you lies in that part of

you which forms your view of what is evil. Refuse the view and all is well." But to do that you will have to fall back on the ultimate Reality. Your second best only becomes a first best when you can believe that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

XXXVI

THE WINNING OF TRUTH

The love of truth seems to be one of the latest of human acquisitions. People put a thousand other interests before it. For evidence go to the law courts. A cross-examiner gets the truth out of his witness by a process of wrenching. His experience of human nature would almost justify Talleyrand's cynical dictum: "*L'homme a reçu la parole pour pourvoir cacher sa pensée.*" The divorce court has produced a new code of honour: it is that a "gentleman" should lie in the interest of his partner. And in cleaner circles there are multitudes of people with whom it is the most difficult of accomplishments to tell a plain, unvarnished tale. Most often the defect is not in veracity, but in accuracy. Men bring untrained eyes to the fact and see it all wrong. They call in their imagination, which is often the biggest part of their mind. The world, as it is, is not wonderful enough, and so we invent wonders. Our little adventure becomes an unheard of feat. We must have our sensation at all costs. If the bare fact does not produce it, we must help the fact.

The worst of it is that the world's great teaching institutions have yielded to this epidemic of inaccuracy —have been, indeed, among the chief propagators of it. Religion, our realm of the wonderful, has for ages been infected with the disease. So much of

our modern difficulty of faith lies in the fact that the Church in past ages preferred this wonderful to the plain statement. It had achieved its worst when it made salvation depend on believing what was false. How far ecclesiasticism has, in this direction, affected the best minds is exhibited in that paragraph of Newman's in his essay on Development, where he speaks of " the principle that it is a duty ' to follow and speak the truth,' which really means that it is no duty to fear error, or to consider what is safest, or to shrink from scattering doubts, or to regard the responsibility of misleading ; and thus it terminates in heresy or infidelity." Even Buddhism can teach us better than that. Contrast with this breath from the ecclesiastical hothouse the utterance of Buddha in the " Kalama Sutra " ; " Do not believe in traditions simply because they have been handed down for many generations ; nor in anything which is rumoured and spoken of by many ; or because the written statement of some old sage is produced. Do not believe in that as truth simply because you have been attached to it by habit, on the authority merely of your teachers and elders. But after observation and analysis, and when the thing agrees with reason, and is conducing to the good and benefit of all, then accept it, and live up to it."

The East, which has lived so largely on fables—and sufficiently monstrous ones—has here indeed a gleam of the true light. It is a gleam which the West, in these later ages, has been learning to follow, and with great results. We are at last finding out that humanity is to be saved not by falsehoods, however

augustly sanctioned, but by truths; and that these truths have to be won by an arduous and long-continued process. We are discovering, also, that what is true in one realm is valid, and has its say in all realms; that you cannot shut off one department from any other; that Church truth has no privilege of isolation or of special treatment; that to be accepted it must come first into the arena and prove its case, in face of all others that have been solidly established.

Theology has at last entered, with the other sciences, into the realm of observation and experiment. Its authority henceforth will be founded, not on the *ipse dixit* of popes or of councils, but on the verdicts of trained research. This movement, so slow at its beginnings, retarded by all the prejudices, the ignorances of our race, is destined, one can see, to an ever-accelerating movement. Our colleges, our universities, are turning out a generation that has caught this temper. All over the world are to be found men who, inspired with the passion for knowledge, sit at the extreme of the known and wrestle with Nature for yet more of her unknown. And they see there is only one way to win her secrets. It is not by tradition, by the authority of this name or that, but by testing, by experiment. It is the spirit of Faraday, who would never accept a new position until he had himself verified it. This spirit, which to-day animates our highest men, is filtering down. It is entering our schools, our literature; it is moulding unconsciously the thoughts of men. It is altering our whole view of the past; revaluing it and creating a future that will be widely different.

But this is to say very little. When we talk about the winning of truth what chiefly concerns us is the kind of truth we win. For truth has all grades and all qualities. There are thousands of things you may know which will leave you pretty much where you were, while not to know them will not matter very much. You may get on without recollecting the orbit of Neptune, or how many wives Henry VIII. had. We cram these things in examinations. For the rest you can turn them up any day in your encyclopædia. This is what we call truth in our earlier years; when we stuff ourselves with detail; when we fill our memories with names and dates; when we think we know a thing by simply remembering it; when we imagine this parrot business to be the wisdom of the wise.

We get an insight into real values here when we ask ourselves whether truths of this order would be worth dying for? And yet men have died for truth. Multitudes have sacrificed everything for it; have lived in it and by it; have had their characters changed through it; in its strength have made history; have become heroes and martyrs. We perceive, then, there are truths and truths. Some exceed others in their value by the height of heaven above earth. These, to be sure, are not the truth about a name or a date, about mileage in space, about the facts of Court chroniclers. The truth which men have found worth winning has been truth about life, about themselves, about the spiritual realities. And this truth, where it has been mighty, has always been a truth *won*; obtained, not by memory-commitments,

by the cramming of statistics, but by inner experiences, by vast aspirations met by answering facts; by a deepening insight into life; by the flashing as it were of lights from heaven upon souls prepared for the illumination by wrestlings and purifyings.

The moral leaders, the men who influence their fellows, are always such by virtue of a truth they have found for themselves. It is not their neighbour's truth, but their own which makes them. To miss this is to miss character. Says William Penn of his time: "It is a sad reflection that many men have hardly any religion at all, and most men have none of their own. For that which is religion of their education and not of their judgment is the religion of another and not theirs." Milton means the same thing when, in the "Areopagitica," he exclaims: "A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believes things only because his pastor says so, or the assembly so determine, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy." Your truth may be in itself not of the highest; it may be allied with manifold errors; but if it is yours, won by the travail of your own thought and conscience, it is the one saving element in you. All the catechism that has not gone through that process is for you mere dust and *débris*.

We spoke at the beginning of the way in which religion, to its grievous hurt, has so often allied itself with the fabulous; has been so slow to assimilate the scientific spirit. One wonders sometimes how with such encumbrances and drawbacks it has managed to survive at all. We can now see the reason.

It is that always, however astray its formulas may have been, it has held concealed within it the essential truth of living. And the Church has flourished because age after age earnest, thirsting souls, under this form and under that, have struck upon its main idea, and translated it into an inner experience. The enormous difference in men's temperaments, in the set and poise of their souls, sends them at times in what seem opposite directions in search of their saving truth. What a touching story is that which Thomas Scott, the commentator, in his "Force of Truth," tells of his own inner travail: of how, beginning in doubt and denial, he works his way from point to point until he finds in Low Church evangelicalism the convicting and convincing force of his life! And multitudes of excellent men and women have reached their truth of life that way. But not all. His form was not the form of George Fox, nor of James Martineau, nor of Cardinal Manning. The forms, indeed, are almost endless in their variety. We need love's severest discipline in order to appreciate them in their diversity. The one question we are entitled to put before we criticise, still more before we condemn, is, whether under his confession, whatever it may be, the man has caught the truth of the higher living; whether his segment of belief is part of the great curve upwards!

And here let it be noted that we have not by any means won our truth when we have accepted it for the intellect. It is not ours till it has got deeper down; has become alive and operative in our character, a part of our way of living. And so it is the simplest, widest, most generally accepted truths that are often

hardest of winning. How easy to sign a belief in God as Holy and Omnipresent! But how far has that reached in you and me? How far have we got in that "practice of the presence of God" which Brother Lawrence, that delightful monk of the Middle Ages, has given us an example of? When you have commenced believing that, in the real living sense of belief, you will have enough creed to last you, methinks, for this life and the next.

Or take the doctrine of the love of our neighbour. It is universally admitted. It is plainly part of the Gospel, and all the Confessions agree upon it. But how many of us have dared really to accept it? Do we see what it really implies; that every man is essentially loveable; has the Divinely loveable in him, however at present concealed; that it is our first and most urgent debt to develop his love by offering him ours? Do we see that it is only by loving that we can ever understand our neighbour? That our treatment of him, apart from this first principle, will be as maladroit as would be that of a blacksmith endeavouring to mend a watch with a crowbar?

Christendom has had this truth in its midst for nigh twenty centuries, but it has not yet won it. When it does there will be an end of the present European conditions. The peoples and their governments will believe with Emerson, that "the standing army, the arsenal, the camp, and the gibbet do not appertain to man. They only serve as an index to show where man is now." They will believe, and act on the belief. They will shift their foundations, which to-day are fear, jealousy and mistrust, exchanging them for mutual

confidence and goodwill. The symbols of their international creed will cease to be countless bayonets and multiplying *Dreadnoughts*. Their place will be taken by the badges of commerce, the insignia of peace, the free exchange of every material and moral good.

Let us sum up some of the lessons of this study. There is an enormous difference in the moral quality of truths. You cannot live by another man's truth; you must live by your own. You cannot be saved by untruths, whatever may be their outside sanctions. The winning of the higher truths involves a perpetual moral discipline. As the discipline proceeds, the truths will shine with every brightening lustre. The way of ascent here, as one of the Church Fathers observes, is by holiness of life. We can only influence our fellows by the truth we have ourselves won. Says a French writer, "*Chacun a la voix de son esprit.*" Each soul has its own voice, and there is no mistaking the voice of a convinced soul. Your preacher lacks the essential in his argument if he has not the accent of conviction. And his convictions, if he has any, will show in his actions. Porphyry was not a Christian, but he has a word here to every Christian teacher—"Whoever holds a belief must live in accordance with it, in order that he may himself be a faithful witness to the hearers of his words." Religious revival can only be accomplished in this way. The Church has to-day to win its truth all over again, the truth of the highest living and highest acting. Men may scorn the ancient propositions, the old world dogmatism. What they cannot disregard is a spiritual principle, embodied in the lives of faithful witnesses.

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